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ON THE  
STATE OF EUROPE  
BEFORE AND AFTER THE  
*FRENCH REVOLUTION;*

BEING  
AN ANSWER  
TO  
*L'Etat de la France à la Fin de l'An VIII.*

---

BY FREDERICK GENTZ,  
COUNSELLOR AT WAR TO HIS PRUSSIAN MAJESTY, &c. &c.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN  
By JOHN CHARLES HERRIES, Esq.

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# INTRODUCTION

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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*L'ETAT de la France à la Fin de l'An 8*, was an anonymous publication at Paris in the autumn of 1800. The Author was not long concealed, and he was generally known to have written under the auspices and authority of the French Government.

The work itself betrayed its origin throughout. It was every where marked by the most inveterate enmity to this country; and was evidently written with a view to convert the nations of the continent to the same sentiment. It announced and explained a variety of plans for the gratification of the envy and hatred which it endeavoured to excite; and it ought rather to have been called A Dissertation on the Necessity and

the Means of ruining England, than An Examination of the State of France.

At any other period, such a production, though it might have been amusing to a very superficial politician, would hardly have excited the attention, much less required the answer, of a profound and enlightened writer. But it appeared at a time when certain unfortunate and unfounded prejudices against this country were at their highest pitch; and it was craftily designed to inflame that spirit of animosity which could alone give currency to its absurdities. Upon these grounds it acquired a degree of popularity, sufficient to induce a Prussian writer, whose talents have before been displayed in some excellent political works, to undertake the refutation of it.

The following is a translation of this reply of Professor Gentz to Citizen Hauterive: but had the German been only valuable as an answer to the French publication, I certainly should have spared myself the pains of preparing it for the  
English



English press. It would have been a very superfluous labour in a country where the pamphlet that gave rise to it, had excited neither admiration nor argument.

But the merits of Mr. Gentz's work are not confined to the controversy before him. His *State of Europe* is something more than an occasional treatise : it has an independent and general character. And though the arguments and assertions of his adversary are completely disposed of, yet the ordinary spirit and defects of polemical writings have been carefully and judiciously avoided : a circumstance which does him the more honour, as he had received what might be esteemed just provocation from the French writer, who treated him without candour or respect in his allusions to some of his former productions.

*L'Etat de la France* is one continued attack, direct or indirect, upon the rights and interests, the credit and conduct, of Great Britain. No argument, no semblance of an argument, has been left untried to criminate her politics, and

to detract from her character. It is needless to anticipate Mr. Gentz's observations on this general scope of Hauterive's work ; he has condescended to analyze some of the charges against a nation to which he is himself a stranger ; and nothing more is necessary to confute them.

It was more immediately his province to vindicate the *law of nations* against a writer who is a principal (because the organ of the French government) in a conspiracy to subvert by fraud, what yet remains undemolished by force ; and upon the ruins of the old to establish a new system, in which an absolute supremacy is to be conceded to France, while England is to be made to “ *resume her station among nations of the second order.*” This Mr. Gentz has completely done ; and at the same time repelled a singular attempt to ascribe the sins of France to the misconduct of Europe, in a manner quite novel, and, I think, peculiar to this author of the eighth year.

From the moment when the present government had established itself upon the ruins of the  
last

last jacobinical authority, the principles and events of the revolution were no longer themes of praise and admiration for the political writers of France. *Liberty and equality* had retired before the bayonets of Bonaparte's grenadiers; democratic tyranny had yielded to the genius and fortune of an aspiring soldier; and the admirers of the change could not celebrate the event without condemning the conduct of the *great nation* during the ten years that preceded it. Hauterive does not defend the revolution; on the contrary; he considers it as an evil of the first magnitude; but his object is to prove that France is not responsible for the miseries thereby occasioned to Europe, but that Europe, on the contrary, is the guilty cause of all that France herself has suffered; and he labours to persuade us that the French revolution, with all its disastrous consequences, was the fruit of the misconduct and corruption of the governments of other nations. Whether he has succeeded, as he himself assumes, in his attempt to prove this extraordinary position, will be seen by the following work, in which Mr. Geptz has contradicted it by a very

able and elaborate review of the State of Europe before the Revolution.

It may here be proper to make a few observations on a very principal part of Hauterive's book ; because it involves a question of the highest import to this country, and because it is not discussed in the answer of Mr. Gentz, who has reserved it for a separate publication, a sequel to the present.

When the *Etat de la France* was produced by an Honourable and Learned Member of the House of Commons in his seat \*, it was represented as aiming at the destruction of the existing relations of belligerent and neutral powers, and labouring to establish a system directly hostile to the interests of England, and contrary to the present law of nations.

The contest which has been terminated so honourably and satisfactorily for Great Britain, after a struggle of near fifty years, will be a subject of admiration to future ages, when it shall

\* Dr. Lawrence, on the 5th of March.

have been faithfully described by the pen of some impartial historian.

Europe has been long alarmed, and in one instance severely afflicted, by a most unjustifiable conspiracy against the rights of belligerent powers, against the spirit and the letter of the law of nations, against the stipulations of the most solemn treaties, and against the consecrated usages of all maritime states. We have seen the politics of princes stooping to serve the avarice of fraudulent traders, and arming themselves against the law which forbids the nefarious system of covering actual hostility by professed neutrality.

Moderation and firmness have conducted Great Britain to a happy termination of the difficulties involving the maintenance of her just rights: and we may now look back with a mixture of exultation and regret to the rise and progress of the contest.

Let us, in the first place, inquire if there be any thing more than mere declamation in Citizen Hau-  
terive's chapter on this subject; if there be any  
truth

truth in his assertions, or any reason in his arguments. In the course of this examination we shall have an opportunity of adverting to the character and principal circumstances of the league which attempted to realize his projects and desires.

After some general observations on the situation of neutral powers in time of war, which are neither very new, nor very perspicuous, he proceeds thus :

“ I have mentioned the maritime preponderance of England; the consciousness of her superiority has given rise to pretensions which the relative weakness of other powers has permitted her to enforce as rights; whence two distinct maritime codes, the one acknowledged by all Europe, the other insisted on by England alone \*.”

To impute consummate ignorance to the writer of such a passage, would be to carry lenity too

far. He was writing for the French government, and of course possessed better information. Though it be easy to guess the object, it is very difficult to conceive the assurance necessary for asserting “ *that the maritime law insisted on by England, is one which she has set up in consequence of her naval superiority.*”

He must have trusted to two things: 1st, that nobody would read the whole of his book, and 2dly, that all his readers would be utterly ignorant of history; for a knowledge of history, or a perusal of his work, are alike sufficient to refute his assertion. In another place he has taken extraordinary pains to shew that the *Navigation Act* is the original cause of this fatal preponderance of the English marine. Now the Navigation Act took place in 1651. He must therefore renounce all consistency, or assert that the maritime law of England was unknown till near the end of the seventeenth century. But the maritime law of England is the maritime law expressed and defined in the *Consolato del Mare*, a work published in the thirteenth century, and  
even



even then stated as ancient and established ; explained and commented upon by Grotius (*de Jure Belli & Pacis*), by Voetius (*de Jure militari*), and by many other celebrated jurists who lived *before* the establishment of that very superiority which is said to have produced their doctrines. The eminent writers of France and Germany, who have treated the subject in the last century, have uniformly quoted the above-mentioned as the highest authorities. The pretended recent code is almost universally referred to the *eleventh century* : and its first positive document is dated by none later than the *thirteenth* ; so that the maritime law of England was the law of Europe, long before any such extension of her commerce, or such naval superiority as could have given rise to it in the manner here described.

So much for this ill-digested attempt to connect the *maritime law* with the *maritime power* of England.

The Author then expatiates on the advantages of the “ *code acknowledged by all Europe* ;” the  
*entire*

*entire freedom of neutral commerce in time of war ;* and we might infer from what he says, that England is guilty of the greatest folly for not adopting it, because she would necessarily be the greatest gainer by it. He then proceeds to observe, “ France has always given less disturbance to the commerce of neutrals than any other maritime power.” This is a round assertion ; and I only notice it, to observe that it is contradicted by very good French authority. *Valin* declares that the ordinances of the French marine went at one time beyond the practice of every other nation, except Spain \*, in severity ; for they condemned *both* ship and cargo, when *either* was the property of an enemy : England can never be accused of such rigour.

“ France has been the first to propose at home  
 “ and abroad, that neutral commerce should  
 “ be freed from all its shackles ; that cruising  
 “ should be abolished ; and that the commercial  
 “ profession, its agents, &c. should for ever be  
 “ exempt from violence and hostility.” France

\* Spain only adopted this severity in imitation of France.

has not deviated from her ordinary politics in this respect :—she has always distinguished between the *right* and *expedient* ; and has never failed to renounce the former where it could not be combined with the latter. She is perhaps not singular in this respect ; but why talk of her justice and generosity ?

It cost her nothing to make the legislative and diplomatic proposal alluded to in such terms of praise by Citizen Hauterive. She proclaimed and preached up the perfect freedom of neutral commerce, at the commencement of the late war, at a time when it was necessary to herself, and injurious to her rival. But in this she was so little studious of consistency, that as early as the 9th of May 1793, she passed a decree more severe than had yet been seen in Europe against the trade of neutrals ; and afterwards continued to repeal and renew her maritime statutes day after day, as occasion served for enforcing or relaxing them.

But

But let us go a little farther back in the history of Europe, and take a brief survey (such as the limits of a Preface will allow) of the principal events connected with this important question. If faithfully made, it will enable us to appreciate the conduct of France as well as of every other power concerned in the attempt to deprive Great Britain of a right she has strenuously and successfully maintained.

The project of forcibly abolishing a practice founded on the clearest principles, and consecrated by long and universal assent, may be easily explained, though it never can be justified. As the private interests of individuals are prone to break through the regulations of each well-ordered community ; so the private views of a few states created the attempt to resist, and, if possible, to destroy, the established law of Europe. In proportion as the nations of the North adopted the habits, and aspired to the advantages of commerce, they became impatient to cultivate a wide field of gain displayed to neutral states, amidst the hostilities of the principal maritime

ritime powers. This they might have done with considerable profit to themselves, and without infringing the rights, or injuring the interests, of any of the belligerent nations. But the spirit of avarice knows no bounds; and the just restraints, imposed by the law of nations, were found too narrow for its speculations. The neutrals were not satisfied with that fair and honourable extension of their commerce which was opened to them as often as a state of warfare restricted the trade and diverted the navigation of the countries engaged in it; they required more; they insisted on the liberty of carrying their transactions beyond the bounds of neutrality; of acting in concert with either party without contravention from the other, by supplying all the articles necessary to the prosecution of the war; and thus of becoming, as it were, parties to it on either side, according to their immediate interests, without being subject to its dangers or difficulties.

It would be absurd to enter into any discussion of such pretensions upon the principles of  
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natural justice, and they are completely contrary to established law. The thirst of gain, however, excited very formidable attempts against both ; and it has devolved entirely upon the nation immediately interested in the maintenance of them to repel the aggression upon the rights of all. The eighteenth century has seen a confederacy calling itself the Armed Neutrality, the object of which was no other than to enforce these innovations, and to introduce a system utterly incompatible with every principle of justice. A brief review of the rise and progress of this confederacy will throw some light upon its character and motives.

The Prussian flag was scarcely known in the commercial world, when it began (about the year 1746) to be distinguished by a most flagrant prostitution of its neutral character, being almost wholly engaged in the very profitable practice of covering the shipping and goods of the enemy then at war with Great Britain. This was perhaps more lucrative than any other branch of business at that time within the reach

of the Prussians : it certainly was more lucrative than honourable. The vigilance of the British navy in some degree diminished the profits of these speculators ; and in many instances they were condemned by the tribunals of this country, which, according to the law of nations, confiscated the vessels or cargoes of the enemy wherever they were detected. It is needless to add, that these prosecutions were all carried on with that strict impartiality which so peculiarly distinguishes every court of justice under the British constitution. If either party had cause to complain, it was surely that which was compelled to use such vigilance, and adopt such prosecutions, in defence of its rights and interest. In the year 1752, however, the Prussian minister presented a memorial from his court, complaining of the injury sustained by Prussian subjects from the conduct of our cruisers, and the proceedings of our maritime tribunals : transmitting, at the same time, the sentence of a commission appointed at Berlin for the investigation of these grievances ; and informing the court of St. James, that if they were not otherwise

wise



wise redressed, his Prussian Majesty would take indemnity by the stoppage of the debts due to individuals in this country, and assigned upon the dutchy of Silesia. This memorial is rendered very remarkable by its being the first public profession of a principle, which has since been made the basis of the hostile league called the Armed Neutrality: the Prussian commissioners assume the proposition, that “*free ships make free goods,*” as the groundwork of all their proceedings.

This affair created considerable alarm throughout the nation. The memorial was answered by the British ministry in a firm though moderate tone, and in a very full and explicit manner. The principles advanced were refuted by an appeal to the highest authorities and to numerous treaties, which confirmed the very reverse as an established rule, either by explanations of it, or exceptions to it; and the justice and propriety of the proceedings here were so ably demonstrated as to leave no room for the slightest

doubt upon the subject. The King of Prussia renounced his pretensions.

This question appears to have remained at rest from that time until the year 1780 ; at least the uniform practice of the English navy, and the decisions of our courts, were not publicly objected to. At that period it was revived, and a much more formidable attempt was made to subvert the existing law of nations, and to assert a principle directly hostile to the welfare of Great Britain.

We have nothing here to do with the secret intrigues and cabals which preceded and determined the manifesto addressed by Russia\* to all the maritime powers of Europe. Whatever might be the immediate cause of it, it would most probably never have appeared, had not the situation of the several belligerent powers presented a very favourable opportunity for introducing the new maritime code which it went to esta-

March 1786.

blish.

blish. It announced a convention between the states of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark (afterwards acceded to by Prussia), entered into for the purpose of maintaining what was called the rights of neutral powers. The rights thus arrogated, amounted to nothing less than an unlimited freedom of commerce; a liberty of trading without any restriction whatever, with and for any or all of the belligerent powers in time of war; of supplying them with articles till then forbidden by the maritime law of Europe; and, in short, of adding to the distresses or facilities of either of the contending parties at their pleasure: thus requiring that every nation should consent to further their views of gain, though absolutely contrary to its own interests, and in utter defiance of every natural and positive law of nations.

The manner in which this declaration was received by the several courts to which it was addressed, was a new proof that policy has little to do with justice. The answer of the court of Versailles is the first instance of what Citizen

Hauterive extols as the *efforts of France to promote a more equitable system of maritime law in Europe*. The practice of France was as severely condemned, her rights were as unquestionably attacked in this communication, as were those of England, Spain, and Holland. But the ministry of Spain, Holland, and France, received and replied to it in a manner that shewed how little it was then their interest to maintain those rights. They were little less than astonished at the amazing political wisdom of the court of Peterburgh; and France in particular was highly gratified to behold the *congeniality of sentiment*, and the *similarity of opinion*, which had induced the Empress of Russia to adopt views, and prosecute plans, which had so long occupied the French court, and were the only cause of its engaging in the present war! The plain truth of the matter is, that the powers then at war with England, were eager to seize an opportunity of adding to the distresses of their enemy, by renouncing a system, of which the breach happened at that moment to be more advantageous to them than the observance. They  
were

were well aware what would be the conduct of Great Britain on the occasion ; and they hoped to see Russia added to the list of our enemies. It is evident that the measure was, at that time, injurious and hostile to England alone. In the midst of her unfortunate dissensions with her colonies, she had been attacked by France and Spain ; who, on an occasion so favourable to their views, hoped to degrade, if not to ruin her. She maintained the contest with a dignity and force which astonished the world ; her energies increased with her dangers and difficulties ; and her navy, rising even beyond its former greatness, baffled the military efforts, and distressed the commercial navigation, of her enemies. No wonder then that her opponents readily acceded to a plan which was to wrest from Britain one of the principal means of annoying them ; which was to facilitate their operations by procuring them numerous supplies cut off by the vigilance of the British cruisers ; and which was to check the superiority of Great Britain, where alone she was superior. Such were the motives of a conduct which is now impudently

ascribed to a sense of justice, and a love of right.

The then embarrassed situation of this country prevented its government from resenting the hostile proceedings of the northern powers, as they would otherwise have done : avoiding the discussion of the novel principles of the confederacy, they contented themselves with referring to the justice and moderation hitherto manifested in the conduct of the English nation, and their firm resolution to maintain their rights with the same unalterable disposition ; reminding the confederates of their respective alliances and treaties with Great Britain, which no proceeding on her part had given them the smallest reason to violate or annul.

This convention was, however, in reality, only a temporary measure ; being professedly concluded for the duration of the then existing war. But it was declared at the same time, “ that it should serve as a basis for all engagements which conjunctures might render it necessary to contract

contract for the future, and on account of any new maritime war ; and that it should be regarded as a law in matters of commerce and navigation whenever there should be a question of appreciating the rights of neutral nations." The King of Sweden was extremely desirous of seeing these principles established upon a more permanent footing by the general consent of Europe ; for which purpose he urged the propriety of a congress in which the several concerns of the belligerent and neutral powers might be examined and defined ; being solicitous that the war should not be terminated, and with it the northern convention, without the previous interference of the neutral powers for the establishment of a permanent maritime code of laws.

Thus the armed neutrality was considered, even by those who were parties to it, as an innovation in the law of nations ; and the rights they assumed were conceived to require a higher sanction than the stipulations of a partial confederacy. To obtain this, was the wish and endeavour of the  
King



King of Sweden ; but he was disappointed. The belligerent powers made separate treaties of peace, and the maritime convention was suffered to expire without further discussion, and without any measure for perpetuating its provisions.

How far the parties to this league were actuated by that sense of justice held forth in all their public declarations on the subject, may be easily seen from the conduct of one of them in the very first instance of its becoming a belligerent power, and, of course, entitled to exercise the right which it had opposed when England was in that situation. This happened in 1790, when a war broke out between Sweden and Russia. We have seen that the former of these powers was particularly active in the project for abolishing the practice of searching neutral traders, and confiscating the property of an enemy found on board. But that was at a time when Sweden was a neutral, and England a belligerent power. The case was now reversed ; England was at peace, and Sweden was engaged in war. And behold, the full value of the right which had

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lately

lately been contested, its justice and validity, were now acknowledged and maintained by Sweden. English vessels navigating the Baltic, and bound to the ports of Russia, were detained and visited by the Swedish cruisers, whose government even increased the list of contraband, so lately and so loudly complained of, by the addition of some articles (money and provisions, for example) till then not included in it.

How were the enemies of England disappointed in their hope of seeing the armed neutrality revived at the commencement of the following war ! The first and most powerful supporter of the principles upon which it was founded, was compelled by the conduct of France to abandon its neutrality. Russia, though secured by her situation from the immediate aggression of the anarchists, was forced by their insults and provocations to partake of the indignation, and in some degree of the alarm, that agitated the more neighbouring nations. She acceded to an alliance for preserving the tranquillity of Europe, and perhaps restoring peace to France ; and in the capacity of a belligerent power, she renounced the principles of the  
armed

armed neutrality, and stood forward to practise and enforce a right against which she had lately contended. Her admirals were instructed to use every means of obstructing the commerce of the common enemy, and to confiscate his property wherever it might be found on the high seas, without regard to the protection of a neutral flag. Thus the new maritime code was supplanted by the law of nations, in the practice of the very power with whom the northern confederacy had originated.

The rulers of France had now succeeded by their unremitted endeavours, their brutal insults, and their unprovoked aggressions, to involve their country in war with every power in Europe that possessed a territory worth plundering, or a constitution worth subverting. England, with evident reluctance on her part, had been added to the number ; and, from her peculiar situation and resources, soon became a principal in the bloody contest which desolated Europe. But how was England to be involved in the miseries inflicted on the nations of the continent ? How was this prosperous island, the abode of peace, tranquillity, and happiness, to be converted into a wilderness

dernefs

derness of blood and ruin ? A happy constitution, administered with vigilance and wisdom by a limited authority, promised no success to the principles of France ; and Nature had opposed insurmountable obstacles to her arms. Republican rapacity beheld with rage our fertile fields, our rich and populous cities, our crowded ports, and all the valuable productions of our industry, inaccessible to her insatiable thirst of blood and plunder ; revolutionary fury was raised almost to madness by the aspect of our security and happiness ; and the speeches and writings of the Convention and its agents are replete with the bitterest reproaches against England, as the most formidable and hated opponent of one of its “ *sublime vocations, the disorganization of Europe* \*.”

The power and prosperity of England were therefore to be attacked in a more circuitous way

\* *Camille Desmoulins*, in reply to Brissot.—And is this what *Hauterive* alludes to when he says “ that the conduct of France at the time when she was incapable of framing her measures upon the principles of deliberate prudence, is a proof that her politics are *instinctively* in unison with the interests, the independence, and prosperity of all nations ?”

than

than the possessions of *Spain, Austria, and Prussia*. They were not exposed to the direct invasions by which *Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, &c.* were to be desolated. Her navy and commerce were to be humbled; and for this purpose the principles of the armed neutrality were to be revived, and a maritime coalition was to be formed against her.

These objects were pursued with indefatigable zeal; with an ardour, perseverance, and uniformity, which astonish when we consider the number and variety of the factions that successively assumed the reins of empire. Nothing was omitted that negotiation or intrigue could effect, to induce the neutral maritime states to embrace this system of hostility to England. They were successively exhorted, and cajoled, and threatened, and at length persecuted to favour the views of France; while at the same time, numberless publications less celebrated than that now before us, were executed in the same spirit, and disseminated with the same intention. In short, our Author  
himself

himself tells us, “ what France has hitherto done, is the *maximum* of what she has been able to do for the establishment of a new code of maritime law \*.”

Though we cannot but smile at the idle attempt to ascribe this conduct and these efforts to the prodigious *impartiality* and *benevolence* of the demagogues of France ; yet I think no English writer would depart so far from sense and decency, as to load them with as much invective for endeavouring to subvert the law of nations, as Citizen Hauterive has lavished against this country for strenuously maintaining it. Virulence and abuse are often symptoms of weakness in matters of controversy ; an unnecessary display of words betrays a want of argument : what then are we to infer from the abusive *verbiage* of the present Author ? At the end of his modest proposal of a new ma-

\* “ Ce que la France a fait est le *maximum* de ce qu'elle a pu faire jusqu'à ce jour pour l'établissement du code public maritime.”

ritime code, he adds, " I am aware of all the obstacles that England would oppose to the introduction of such wise regulations : every thing that is wise must be contrary to the principles she professes ; every thing that is just must be in opposition to the rights she insists upon \*."

These expressions require neither refutation nor comment ; they only serve to shew the temper of the writer. A general and unqualified censure is surely no argument ; a disputant cannot advance his cause by calling his adversary fool or villain.

To return to the intrigues of France : they were not successful. The neutral powers of the North were either unable or unwilling to second her views. A strict neutrality was the professed object of their desires ; and a treaty was concluded in March 1794, between Denmark and Sweden,

\* " Je fais tout ce que des lois aussi sages doivent rencontrer d'obstacles de la part d'Angleterre : tout ce qui est sage est contraire à ce qu'elle établit en principe ; tout ce qui est juste est en opposition, avec ce qu'elle érige en droit."

by no means favourable to the designs of the republicans. In this convention, all idea of innovation was formally disclaimed ; and the two powers declared their object to be the maintenance of former treaties, and the existing law of nations. All this was contrary to the views of France ; but the conduct of those powers did not so much concern her as that of the United States of America.

In a plan for destroying the commerce of this country, and undermining the foundation of the British navy (the most formidable bulwark of Europe against the hostile attempts of France), the co-operation of America was of the greatest consequence. As a commercial nation, America stood next in importance to Great Britain, though far behind her ; a very considerable part of her shipping was employed in the trade with England ; she possessed a more extensive commercial marine, and more skilful navigators, than any other of the neutral powers ; her harbours were numerous and excellent, and in the vicinity of our West Indian possessions. If, therefore, they

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could



could have persuaded the Americans to assert the new system of maritime law, or, in other words, to join in a conspiracy against this country, they expected to have given a severe blow to the resources of Great Britain ; and by converting the commercial marine of their allies into a naval force, they hoped to injure or destroy one of the sources of our wealth, and to deprive our industry of one of the principal fields for the display of its productive powers. It is easy to perceive that such a rupture would have been infinitely more prejudicial to the *United States* ; and its promoters could not but be aware of all its fatal consequences to the power they were endeavouring to impel headlong to its own ruin, in order to serve their purposes. But such considerations appear never to have had much weight with the French government ; the fate of its allies has always been made subservient to its own interests. And yet we are told that the “ *politics of France are instinctively in unison with the happiness and independence of all nations.*” Twenty years ago such an assertion would have been termed extravagant and ridiculous ; at the present time it

would

would be difficult to find a name for it. It has been boldly made in the face of experience, and in shameless contradiction to the evidence of facts; facts of which the remembrance is yet fresh, and of which the traces are, perhaps, for ever indelible. A satire upon the judgment of the world, it is a gross and ungenerous insult to the humbled nations, who, after having been plundered under the mask of friendship, are retained in a state of vassalage, while they are mocked with the title of allies.

Happily for America, her government proved superior to all the artifices and intrigues of France; and her situation protected her from the usurpations which the republicans had every where else effected by force of arms. She wisely declined all participation in the glories and felicity of Belgium, Holland, Spain, Italy, &c. of whose union, or connexions with the Great Nation, *Hanterive* speaks in such terms of rapturous admiration; and she firmly resisted every attempt to force upon her what she had refused to yield to solicitation. On the other hand, no means were neglected to

ensure her choice or obedience: the history of those proceedings is in the memory of every one; we have only here to do with them as far as they form a part of the labours of France in the establishment of the new maritime code, concerning which the Author before us has spoken so falsely, and reasoned so unwarrantably. The best reply to his statements and declamations may be extracted from the memorials presented to the French government by the American ministry, and by the elaborate account of his conduct rendered by the President to Congress, when, after four years of unsuccessful negotiation and intrigue, *France* had proceeded to open violence, and left no alternative to the *United States*, but that of war with France or England. These papers afford the best comment upon the conduct of the defenders and opposers of the law of nations. Proceeding from a country whose politics have always been supposed more favourable to France than England, and who at that particular time had conceived some cause of resentment against the latter, no Frenchman can have reason to complain of their partiality. They will sufficiently expose the

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falsehood

falsehood of our Author's statements with regard to the origin, as well as the justice, of the maritime practice of England.

First, what does Citizen Hauterive say of the origin of this practice? These are his words: " I have called this law the maritime law of England, because it has originated in the maritime wars of the eighteenth century, and that the maritime wars of the eighteenth century have all been excited, protracted, and directed by England \*."

The executive government of America, however, did not think so: they declare, at the end of their note to *Citizen Adet*, in November 1796, " the captures made by the British of American vessels having French property on board, are warranted by the law of nations. The force and operation of this law was contemplated by France and the United States, when they formed

\* For the complete refutation of this account of the origin of the wars of the last century, see any historian, French, German, or English.

their treaty of commerce, and their special stipulation on this point was meant as an exception to an universal rule ; *neither our weakness nor our strength have any choice when the question concerns the observance of a known rule of the law of nations.*

Hauterive does not scruple to assert, “ such is the maritime law which the states of Europe (the one by its *perseverance*, the rest by their *passiveness*) have, as it were, consecrated ; and to the reform of which, France calls the attention of all nations, and invokes the wisdom of all governments.”

Now in a note from the American envoy to the French government, it is stated, “ Vattel, b. iii. 115. says positively, ‘ *that effects belonging to an enemy found on board a neutral ship, are seizable by the rights of war.*’ But it is deemed unnecessary to multiply citations to this point, because France herself is supposed to have decided it in her Maritime Ordonnance of the year  
1744,

1744 \*. Enemies goods, in neutral bottoms, are declared liable to seizure and confiscation. It will not be contended that France continued in a long course of practice and legislation, opposed to her own opinion of the laws of nations. It must then be considered as the opinion of France, that, *under the law*, neutral bottoms afford no protection to the goods of an enemy, &c." The following remarkable passage occurs in the same memorial, and presents a striking contrast to the declamation of the French writer, against what he calls the maritime law of England: "The desire of establishing universally the principle, that neutral bottoms shall make neutral goods, is perhaps felt by no nation on earth more strongly than by the

\* Many more early ordonnances to the same effect might have been quoted: particularly, the celebrated one in 1681, which defines the principle, and asserts the practice, said by Mr. Hauterive to have originated in the wars of the eighteenth century, and the policy of England. This ordonnance of France was copied by Spain in 1718, and the one and the other were only confirmations of the uniform practice of both powers from the earliest times; yet the whole system is said to have been produced by the *maritime preponderance of England in the eighteenth century*! Hauterive could not be ignorant of these things.

United States. Perhaps no nation is more deeply interested in its establishment. But the wish to establish a principle is essentially different from a determination that is already established. The interests of the United States could not fail to produce the wish ; their duty forbid them to indulge it when deciding on a mere right. However solicitous America might be to pursue all proper means tending to obtain for this principle the assent of all, or any of the maritime powers of Europe, she never conceived the idea of obtaining that consent by force. The United States will only arm to defend their own rights : neither their policy nor their interest permits them to arm, in order to compel a *surrender of the rights of others.*"

Thus did the Americans decline the invitations, resist the threats, and refute the principles by which the French government unremittingly laboured to draw them into a conspiracy against the commercial interests of Great Britain, and of course to produce a rupture between the two powers. The *magnanimous, disinterested* policy of  
France

France was evinced in the mean time by her acting herself upon the very principle she affected to condemn, and she carried the exercise of a right which she beheld with jealousy in others, so far as to violate the solemn treaties by which she had renounced the practice with respect to particular states, always proving, according to Mr. Hauterive, "that the politics of France are instinctively allied with the interests of the independence and prosperity of all nations \*."

But in order to illustrate the truth of what I have here said, and to shew what credit is due to Hauterive's assertions about the *instinctive* politics of France, let us appeal to another French writer of the eighth year. The following passage is extracted from RŒDERER's "*Dix Huit Brumaire*;" and I avail myself the more readily of this testimony, because the language is so strong, and the censure so unreserved, that I should have avoided saying so much myself (though perfectly

\* "Que la politique Française se lie par son instinct seul aux intérêts de l'indépendance et de la prospérité de tous les peuples."



aware of the facts, and convinced of the truth of what he says), lest I might have been suspected of invidious exaggeration under the influence of national prejudice. This publication is likewise considered as official ; for the writer occupied a distinguished place in the French government. These are his expressions :

“ Look at the Batavian, Helvetic, and Cisalpine republics ! What has been the conduct of France towards those countries ? What has she given them, but anarchy, rapine, and devastation ?

“ The various changes made in the governments imposed upon them, and the troubles inseparable from such transitions, have disgusted them in a great measure with liberty itself ; and if we do not hasten, by a protection equally liberal and judicious, to repair the wrongs inflicted on them, the nations on which we have bestowed a representative constitution, may soon learn to regret the fetters we have broken for them.

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“ It is therefore beyond all doubt that these countries have been rendered inimical to us by the excesses of which we have been guilty toward them : while on the other hand, the French republic has committed a still greater error in her conduct toward the neutral states.

“ Nothing could be more conducive to excite enemies against us than our horrible system of legislation (*notre législation horrible*) with regard to the navigation of neutral, and even of friendly and allied powers. It is the depredations committed by French privateers that have principally contributed to produce the rupture between France and America.

“ At the beginning of our revolution, the United States were among the firmest of our allies, the most faithful of our friends. As soon as it was perceived that the Congress no longer inclined in favour of France, the uninformed amongst us raised a clamour against the Americans, accusing them of having ungratefully forgotten the blood we had shed, and the treasure

we had spent, to assert their independence : but these persons must have been ignorant of the enthusiasm which our revolution at first produced in America ; of the rejoicings which were made to celebrate our triumphs over tyranny, and of the transport with which the patriots of this country were received in those climates. It was not till the rage for universal desolation became our only system, till we had conceived the project of sowing division among the Anglo-Americans ; till our privateers, instead of respecting their commerce, had impudently plundered them of their property ; it was not till then that these friends, so much disposed to serve us, were naturally inclined to withdraw their affections from us. The robberies committed by our pirates, destroyed a predilection which we might easily have improved ; a harmony which would have been so advantageous to us, if we had known how to preserve it.

“ The *Danish* flag was subjected to perpetual vexations and affronts ; and it is very remarkable, that notwithstanding the interest which prompted

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us to conciliate the *King of Prussia*, the flag of that monarch was as little afforded as the rest. Had he been in want of a pretext for quarrelling with us, our privateers would have furnished him a thousand ; their depredations on the subjects of this state were carried to such an excess, that Mr. Sandos, the Prussian minister, was at length obliged to renounce the business of negotiating concerning prizes at sea, on account of the little success that attended his remonstrances. The charge of such fruitless proceedings was transferred to a person in an inferior capacity.

“ Such has been our conduct towards the neutral powers ; but we did not stop there : we proceeded with still greater violence and rapacity against our *ally*, our *friend*, the *Batavian republic*. It was not enough that she had herself facilitated our invasion of her territory ; it was not enough that she had received a form of government from our hands ; it was not enough that she had paid us *immense sums by way of indemnification for the trouble of conquering her* ; it was not enough that she had ceded to us a part of her possessions, and  
 had

had engaged to feed and clothe a considerable French army ; it was not enough, in short, that she had quarrelled with England on our account, and that the rupture had led to the annihilation of her commerce, without which Holland is an empty name ; it was not enough that her miserable inhabitants, in order to furnish the Batavian rescptions, granted for the service of the French people, and the payment of its armies, had for the two last years been compelled to pay *the half of their income, and the tenth part of their property* ; in addition to all this, it was necessary that the cruisers of France should seize the few small vessels they yet ventured to send to sea, even in their own roads, even under their own cannon. Did they send supplies of grain to their colonies, in order to victual them, and to prevent their falling into the hands of the English through absolute want of provisions ; French privateers intercepted these succours, and the vessels were declared good prize, according to the vexatious laws enacted on this subject, and of which the application was often pronounced in the provincial tribunals,

bunals, by judges immediately concerned in the privateers themselves." Page 164—170.

This passage, upon which we may now fairly reason, since no man would attempt to object to the sentence which the French have officially pronounced upon themselves ; this passage suggests two important observations immediately applicable to our present subject : 1st, That the clamour of France against the maritime practice of England, being most loud at the very period when she herself was guilty of the greatest enormity and injustice, not in the use, but the abuse of the same rights on which it was founded ; there could not be the smallest reason to suspect that they proceeded from just or honourable motives ; the powers to whom they were addressed, must have perceived that they were the offspring of private hatred, and had nothing to do with public good. 2dly, That if the opposition which was afterwards set up to our rights by the northern states, had really been founded upon the motives openly assigned to it, it is inconceivable why they did not long before that time produce  
a similar

a similar confederacy against the insults and piracies of France. How could they patiently submit to these illegal depredations during ten years, without arming to repel them, and at the end of that period announce a league for the purpose of forcibly opposing the legal proceedings of England? It will surely be found impossible to justify such conduct. It can never be shewn to be consistent.

At the time when Hauterive published his work, the hopes of France were revived by what was passing in the North : and the book itself is one of the many means they had recourse to in order to improve the favourable opportunity, and to kindle the spark into a flame. I think every man who has read it, will allow, that, however great the difficulty of recommending a bad cause, it might have been done more ingeniously. That such a medley of vague assertion, and intemperate declamation, should have been so much read, and in any degree admired, is a strong proof of the violence of those prejudices which the jealousy and envy of other nations, inflamed by the writings

tings and intrigues of our enemies, had excited against us.

Some circumstances perfectly foreign to all maritime concerns, gave a very unexpected, and, it may well be said, a very unnatural turn to the politics of a great northern power, after the conclusion of the campaign of 1799, in which its troops had acted so honourable a part, and rendered such essential service against the common enemy.

Upon the first suspicion of a disagreement between England and Russia, every engine in the hands of France was put in motion to inflame the controversy, and widen the breach. But it would be fruitless to endeavour to explain the motives and trace the progress of a revolution which depended on a mind so singularly constructed as that of the late Emperor. The most intimate alliance was suddenly succeeded by the most furious hostility.



He looked around him for the means of injuring his former friends ; and the armed neutrality was again announced to the world.

Some pretext, however, was necessary to serve as a foundation for the new northern convention, whose object was professedly similar to that of the old. It was expedient to create some ground of complaint against this country, to give it a colour of justice and necessity.

For this purpose a Danish frigate was appointed to convoy some merchantmen of that nation, and the Captain was instructed to resist any attempt of the English cruisers to search or interrupt the vessels under his protection. He encountered some British ships of war at the entrance of the Channel, who *proceeded to exercise the law of nations* in the usual manner : the Dane resisted, according to his orders ; the English employed force, and brought him with his convoy into port.

In the year 1798, a similar occurrence had taken place : a Swedish vessel escorting a fleet of  
 merchantmen,

merchantsmen, refused to permit some British frigates under Commodore Lawford to search them: and a demonstration was made of repelling the attempt by force. The law and practice of nations has attached the penalty of confiscation to resistance of *visitation*. The statutes of France are explicit on this head: the ordinance of 1681, above referred to, expressly declares, art. 12, “ *That every vessel shall be good prize in case of resistance and combat.*”

The Swedish frigate, with her convoy, being brought into Margate Roads, the vessels and cargoes were proceeded against according to public law and ordinary practice.

The case, however, was not a common one. It was remonstrated on the part of Sweden, that the presence of a commissioned ship was a sufficient security for the conduct of its convoy, and the legality of their proceedings; that the direct interposition of the sovereign authority of a neutral power, precluded the right and propriety of search by a belligerent. These pretensions, how-

ever, were not supported by the law of nations ; and the present instance was no proof of its severity in that respect ; for the vessels thus escorted, were many of them laden with naval stores and other contraband articles for the ports of our enemies.

There is no reason, however, to believe that the British government would not have assented to any equitable regulations by which the law might have been modified with regard to the presence of commissioned ships, had it been properly proposed : but its mere expediency to some nations was not sufficient to justify the introducing it by force.

The convention concluded at St. Petersburg in June last, is a sufficient proof of the readiness of the English government to adopt the system most agreeable to the wishes and convenience of other powers, provided it interferes not with its own interests. At that time, however, it could only be guided by the then established law, and general practice of nations ;  
and

and surely no power on earth could undertake, with any hope of success, to beat or bully Great Britain out of her rights. The Swedish merchantmen were condemned by the Court of Admiralty, ship and cargo, for resistance of inquiry and search.

The right of searching vessels under convoy of a commissioned ship, was therefore the most convenient to object to at a time when Russia was resolved to *make* a reason for establishing a hostile convention against England. It was a subject which had long lain dormant\*, because neutral states had not been in the habit of sending armed vessels to escort their merchantmen; and it was not specifically mentioned in the treaty concluded between the two powers in 1797, in which the *right of search* is fully agreed upon by both parties.

\* The right of resisting search by the protection of convoy, was first set up by the Queen of Sweden in 1653, and afterwards much insisted on by Holland in 1655, 1656, and 1657; but these dates carry us far beyond the period within which Mr. Hauterive has fixed the origin of the present maritime code.

The ground of opposition to it was the more specious too, as it appeared to involve the honour and dignity of the complaining states, who insisted upon the respect due to their sovereign authority, and professed to be alarmed by a violation of it. No extraordinary pains were necessary to reconcile the body of the people in the North, to any measures hostile to Great Britain; envy and jealousy, and disappointed avarice, had embittered the trading part of them, whose unjust and illiberal complaints were made the groundwork of a system for exciting the general hatred against this country, by disseminating the most unfounded ideas of the nature and consequence of its commercial and maritime superiority. To propagate and enforce these notions, and to foment these popular prejudices; to describe the prosperity of England, as in contradiction to the interest of all Europe; these are the objects upon which Mr. Hauterive has bestowed the most of his labour and ingenuity. The time, the spirit, and the matter of his work, shew clearly that his grand object was to promote the discontent, and encourage  
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the spirit of hostility against England. And since we are assured that his book met considerable success where its effect was intended to be produced, we may regard it as a part not altogether insignificant of the northern conspiracy.

The ministry of England, in the mean time, were not uninformed of what was going on, and resolved to use every endeavour to avert the storm in such a period of extraordinary difficulty. Upon intelligence of the capture of the Danish frigate (whose business and destination were too obvious to be mistaken), directions were sent to Lord Whitworth to repair to Copenhagen to arrange an immediate agreement concerning that affair, in order to prevent all unpleasant consequences ; reserving the general question for future discussion. According to the stipulations of this agreement, the Danish frigate with her convoy, were immediately restored ; while, on the other hand, Denmark engaged to suspend her convoys till a definitive arrangement of the point in question. This

convention was concluded on the 29th August 1800.

In the mean time (on the 16th August) appeared the declaration of the Emperor of Russia, accompanied by the embargo upon the vessels of the English in all his ports.

This declaration was the groundwork of the subsequent convention, to which it invited the neutral powers; calling upon them to renew the confederacy which they had formed in the year 1780, for the maintenance of the *sacred principles of a wise and impartial neutrality*. To see the manifesto in its true light, it is only necessary to consider the proceedings with which it was coupled. The true character of the armed neutrality is displayed by the temper and occasion that created it: produced at the same birth with a monstrous violation of justice, and equity, and solemn obligations, and recent treaties\* with this country, there could be no doubt concerning

\* " At the commencement of the present war, the court of Petersburg, which had taken the principal part in the

concerning its merits or intent. The several parties who acceded to it, must have felt that they were pledging themselves to an act of direct hostility to England; and engaging in a conspiracy against the private interests of one nation, whose welfare stood connected with the public law of Europe. The convention was first concluded between Sweden and Russia, and afterwards acceded to by Denmark, in direct violation of the recent engagements into which she had entered under the convention with Lord Whitworth.

But the character of this alliance is best elucidated by the palpable contradiction between the conduct and professions of its authors. It was said to have no other views than the maintenance of certain just rights, the introduc-

the formation of the former league, entered with his Majesty into engagements not only inconsistent with the convention of 1780, but of a directly opposite nature; engagements which are still in force, and the execution of which his Majesty is at this moment entitled to claim on every principle of good faith."—Lord Grenville's Note to the Danish and Swedish Ministers, 15th Jan. 1801.

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tion of certain equitable principles, and the abolition of some oppressive practices in maritime affairs. How should such objects have been pursued, to be compatible with the peace and tranquillity of Europe, and consistent with the pacific and upright intentions professed by the parties to this league? Should not the proposed innovations have been candidly submitted, in the way of negotiation, to every power with whose interests they could interfere? Should not some attempt have been made to convince the world of their expediency, and to obtain the peaceable consent of all the nations concerned in them? Can there in justice be any reason for proceeding to hostilities against one nation for practices authorized and enjoined by the ancient laws of Europe, because a few powers have resolved to promulgate new ones? Could certain states, because they agreed, under existing circumstances, to surrender certain rights (while they had no opportunity for exercising them), be justified in taking arms to compel the surrender of them by another power? Or, supposing that such surrender were expedient for the welfare

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of Europe, how could it be consistent with equity to commence a most violent attack upon that power before even its consent had been sought for, or its inclination consulted? No; the armed neutrality, though even its professions were unjustifiable, was nothing of what it professed to be: it was an offensive alliance against England. Not only no attempt was made on the part of the allies to negotiate the points to be established, but the most positive resolution was evinced to avoid all discussion of their merits. The English ministry omitted no efforts to bring the matter into a channel of pacific determination. Ere the British thunder was heard to roll, the olive-branch had been repeatedly proffered to those with whom we had yet any means of communication left.

The moderation of Great Britain continued to be manifested, even when she was driven to the last extremity by the insatuated policy of the northern courts. Although a fleet, equal to the most vigorous and decisive operations, had been equipped with a promptitude and expedition  
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which surprised even those who were best acquainted with the naval resources of the country, a last effort for peace was made by an attempt to come to an amicable explanation with the only power among the confederates with whom the ordinary channels of diplomatic intercourse were still open ; the British ministers having been forced with insult from Peterburgh, and obliged to quit the court of Sweden. A gentleman, recently appointed to a situation of great confidence, was joined in this important and delicate mission with the resident minister at Copenhagen. On his arrival at that city, the British ministers found all means of conciliation barred by a positive refusal on the part of the Danish government to receive their credentials, except on conditions by which the objects in dispute would have been virtually conceded. Even under these circumstances, which left them no option consistent with the honour of their country, but that of putting an immediate end to their mission, one more opportunity was accidentally offered of shewing with how much reluctance the British government  
 asserted

asserted their rights by force of arms. Before the ministers found an opportunity of leaving Copenhagen, an officer arrived with dispatches from Sir Hyde Parker, announcing the arrival of his fleet off the entrance of the Sound. In this awful moment of crisis they once more tendered their credentials for acceptance, which were again refused with circumstances of arrogance, petulance, and precipitation, which shewed the blind obedience of the Danish government at that time, to a power whose favourite policy was to excite an irreconcilable enmity between Great Britain and the maritime powers of the North. I need not detail the glorious events by which this policy was completely frustrated. The rights which British valour defended, have been ascertained and secured by British wisdom and moderation. The same terms were accepted in the hour of victory, which were claimed in the moment of an impending conflict with the united maritime force of Europe, and a league which was expressly formed for the purpose of dictating, under the influence of France, a new code of maritime law

law to the world, has ended in the general acknowledgment and final recognition of the old, under the auspices of Great Britain.

In the mean time our enemies were flattered with the prospect of an approximation to that happy state of things, that beautiful system of commercial peace, which Hauterive describes in such glowing colours : to that emancipation of Europe, that delivery from her political thralldom, by the annihilation of Britain, the never-varying object of the benevolence, impartiality, and wisdom of the rulers of the Great Nation. Alas ! that France should have been only a spectator in the accomplishment of this sublime revolution ; that the world should be indebted to the *Barbares du Nord*, for the inestimable benefit of England's degradation ; and that the liberty of the seas should have been asserted by the passion or caprice of an eccentric despot ! France may, however, with justice, claim the merit of a very active, though not the most striking part of this extraordinary drama. She never will be reproached with having omitted

any species of intrigue, any secret practices, any propagation of falsehood, any incendiary publications, any gross adulation, by which the weakness of princes, and the ignorance or passion of their subjects, could be turned to advantage; by which the powers of the North could be provoked to raise the fabric which should eclipse the glory, and darken the prospects of Great Britain. I think an attentive and impartial perusal of the following work will clearly shew, that a conspiracy against the dearest interests of England, must always prove a conspiracy against the interests of all Europe. Happily for us, and for the world, the success of these plans was only momentary. France did not long enjoy the spectacle of Britain's difficulties. She beheld her undaunted courage, her vigorous efforts, with dismay, and at length saw all her hopes blasted by the good policy and moderation which seized the first opportunity of restoring peace and justice, and in the midst of victory substituted a truly equitable treaty to the hostile convention, misnamed the armed neutrality.

Of this system, the foundation and support was finally proved to the world by the occasion and manner of its dissolution, and Europe beheld how little it had to do with those immutable principles of justice, those extensive views of humanity, that liberal and enlightened policy which are set forth by Hauterive, with all his eloquence, as the true grounds on which the powers of the North are bound to conspire against Great Britain, and to further the views and interests of France. It was grafted on the capricious resentment of a prince, whose conduct has warranted suspicions of derangement, and whose politics were at once the terror and laughter of Europe. With his life it ended : his successor, convinced of the impolicy, as well as injustice of his proceedings towards this country, commenced his reign by undoing the extravagancies of his predecessor. Superior to the intrigues of France, he was insensible to the immense advantages of distressing, or, perhaps, humbling England. He soon made known his inclination to renounce the idle pretensions of the northern league, and to form with England such a convention as might

might secure the just rights of the belligerent and neutral powers, according to the spirit of the ancient law of nations ; and at the same time define those points on which its stipulations were not sufficiently explicit, or of which the general welfare of Europe did perhaps require some modification.

This convention of the 17th June 1801\*, is certainly among the most important in the annals of history. It has not only put an end to the dangers that threatened the safety of England, and the tranquillity of Europe, at the present moment ; but it has, in all human probability, precluded the recurrence of those dangers by its wise and liberal stipulations, equally just and satisfactory to all the parties concerned in it. It seems to have left no dubious point in maritime law which might serve as a pretext for any future quarrel with Great Britain, as a handle for any future intrigues of France. The powers of the North stand pledged to support the system they were lately engaged to oppose ; and the equitable concessions we have consented to make, have added double

\* Vide Appendix, No. I.



strength to the rights we were bound to insist upon. We have lately received the concluding piece of this important treaty ; the accession of Sweden\* has been notified by our minister at St. Petersburg, together with the solemn assurance, that the northern powers have renounced not only the specific alliance which occasioned their rupture with us, but the principle upon which it was founded, and the pretensions it was intended to support.

Such has been the conclusion of a contest in which our best interests were involved. The ancient maritime law of Europe has been successfully maintained, in an age too favourable to revolutions, and against a most formidable attempt to subvert it. The right of belligerent towards neutral powers, has been consecrated by a solemn treaty with all the states whose interests and situation might incline them to dispute those rights. It must further be observed, that there was nothing compulsory in this convention ; it was not the effect of necessity on either side. The arms of Great Britain had not yet encoun-

\* Vide Appendix, No. II.

tered those of the first and principal contracting party ; and the peace concluded was not in consequence of the fortune of war. This circumstance affords a sufficient answer to what Hauterive says when speaking of the law of nations now confirmed : “ That it is a code only maintained by the activity and perseverance of one nation, and the passiveness of all the rest.”

It is evident, indeed, that, as the object of this part of his work has been completely frustrated by the above treaty ; so the arguments and assertions it contains, are completely refuted, if they need any refutation ; at least it has involved the matter in the following dilemma : either his reasoning is inaccurate, and his conclusion false ; or the states of Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, are governed by wicked or incapable ministers. He has entered at great length into the merits of the maritime law as it now stands, in order to prove that it is a “ code of oppression and barbarism,” supporting and supported by the tyranny of England, to the misery and ruin of the rest of Europe. Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, have conse-

crated this code of oppression, this monument of barbarism, though he had promised them, "that France would willingly join all her strength with that of the powers disposed to arm for the purpose of banishing this monument of ignorance and barbarism for ever from the legislation of an enlightened age." Europe must decide between Hauterive and them.

From these observations I think we may draw the following conclusions :

That until the year 1780, France and England asserted the same principles in the practice of maritime warfare ; and that if in their conduct towards neutrals there was any difference, the greater severity was on the side of France.

That at that period, England being engaged in a contest which threatened to exceed her strength, the powers of the North proclaimed their determination to resist a practice that debarred them from considerable sources of gain ; and France, eager to seize an opportunity to injure

jure her enemy and rival, and check the growing superiority of the British navy, immediately concurred in that enterprise to overturn the law of nations; making a merit of renouncing rights which were no longer so useful to her, as the renunciation; loudly contrasting her compliance with the tenacity of Great Britain, and even affecting to be the first mover and prime supporter of this new system, from motives of the strictest justice and most extensive benevolence.

That during the late war it became still more the interest of France to revive the principles of the armed neutrality, because her own navy was reduced to insignificance, and her commercial marine nearly annihilated. Accordingly, the history of her transactions with the neutral powers, is one continued series of varied attempts to excite a maritime coalition under that pretence, against England. The *liberty of the seas* was the specious cry at home and abroad; while her practice, as far as her reduced means would reach, was a constant transgression, not only of such

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professions,

professions, but even of the ancient law of nations which they were designed to supplant.

That her efforts in and out of Europe proved unsuccessful, till some circumstances of a different nature had disposed a great potentate of the North to second her plans of hostility to England ; that her labours redoubled with this dawn of hope ; and that the official publication written at this period by Mr. Hauterive, was a part of them.

That this publication, addressed not to France, but to Europe, was an attempt to inflame the minds of all nations and all princes, and to excite a general coalition against this country. In a chapter (a very principal part of the work) appropriated to the rights and relations of neutral powers, it is endeavoured so to blend and confound the *commercial prosperity* and *maritime practice* of this country, as to render both equally odious, wherever jealousy or avarice has created an aversion to either ; and thus to procure the co-operation of all Europe in a plan, not  
merely

merely to deprive us of the right of searching neutral traders, and capturing enemies property in time of war, but to ruin the very foundation of our happiness, to attack all the sources of our industry, to aim at the annihilation of our commerce, and finally to seek the destruction of Great Britain, as of a monster devouring the substance, and trampling on the independence of Europe.

That the assertions in this part of the work are generally false, and the arguments, for the most part, fallacious; so that a very slight knowledge of history is sufficient to refute many of its leading points. These assertions and arguments were, however, intended to support the principles, and display the views of the men now at the head of affairs in France; and we must not suppose that they have renounced them because the sudden death of the Emperor Paul, and the good sense of his successor, defeated their plans. England will ever be the object of such plans, while she continues to be the stay and bulwark of Europe, against a power whose ambition knows

no bounds, and whose thirst of aggrandizement must be assuaged by continual acquisitions, even in the midst of peace,

Finally, that the tremendous storm which threatened us from the North, having been partly dispelled by the above unexpected circumstance, highly favourable to Great Britain, has been entirely broken and averted by the vigour and promptitude of our arms, and the moderation and wisdom of our councils. That the treaty of the 17th June does great credit to the ministry by whom it was concluded; and that we may rest assured, that, under their guidance, the honour of our country will be effectually asserted, and its interests vigilantly guarded. We may confidently hope that the plans announced by Haute-  
rive for ruining this country, will prove abortive, from the want of co-operation on the part of those powers, without which they cannot be carried into effect; and that the nations of Europe will long continue in that state of insensibility and indolence (that is, of prudence and integrity) of which they are accused in this publication, where  
it

it is said that they have “ *ni le discernement nécessaire pour sentir tout le prix de la liberté, ni assez de résolution pour secondre les efforts de leurs libérateurs :*” which is in English, “ that all the remonstrances, threats, and solicitations of France, are unable to provoke them to enter into a conspiracy to annihilate this country, and enslave themselves \*.”

There

\* The plan which Hauterive proposes to Europe, in the name of the French government, is contained in the following article :

1st. Privateering is to be abolished ; and all the rights of sovereignty are to accompany the flag of neutral powers in time of war.

2d. In peace, the commercial intercourse of nations is to be exempted from every kind of prohibition ; except with respect to the trade between the different ports of the same country, and the navigation between the colonies and mother-country.

In order to compel England to submit to these regulations, he proposes, with regard to the first, that the powers of Europe should join with France to assert it, *à main armée* ; and that, to enforce the second, they should agree to form one *general Navigation Act*, or a system of prohibitive laws similar to the Navigation Act of Great Britain ; differing from it, however, in this important respect, that its operation should not affect all nations alike, but that it should be exclusively directed against *England*, who is thus, by general consent, to be forcibly shut out from all the markets of Europe. To put herself at the head of such a league, and to assist



There is another chapter of Mr. Hauterive's work, which did not come within the sphere of  
Mr.

assist the states of Europe with her arms, her counsels, and by her example (all which he promises in her name), is, as he thinks, the utmost that France can do for the happiness and liberty of Europe. In the present state of things, it would be premature to assert, that France has actually begun to act upon the latter part of this system; and that she is determined to refuse the admittance of every article of British industry or speculation to her markets. We have been assured, from high authority, that she has not evinced any disinclination to a commercial treaty with this country; and we cannot therefore pronounce with certainty upon her present conduct. If, however, it should prove a specimen of her future intentions (though we have lately had reason to hope that she may not follow Hauterive's system), I cannot think that we have much to apprehend on that account. It is now ten years since we have been debarred from all authorized or open intercourse with France; and amidst all the dangers and difficulties of a state of warfare, we have done so well without her connexion, that our commerce has attained to a pitch of greatness unexampled in the history of nations. Can we then for a moment suppose that the same circumstances will be more prejudicial to us with all the advantages of peace? Were this system to be acted on by France alone (and there is not the smallest reason to suppose that any other nation would assist her in it), she would herself be the only sufferer by an attempt to injure us. Her prohibitive statutes will only serve to oppress her own subjects, without preventing the entry of those commodities of which they stand in need, many of which they can only get from hence, and none of them so cheap elsewhere. For, as Hauterive says himself, "*Les loix*  
prohibitives

Mr. Gentz's observations, and on which I must be permitted to say a very few words: I mean that in which he compares the wealth and resources of France, with those of England. The theme of his reasoning is, *that the fabric of England's greatness is artificial and precarious, while the riches and power of France rest upon a solid and immovable foundation.* The arguments by which this proposition, with all its consequences, is attempted to be demonstrated, form by far the most elaborate and ingenious part of his work: he doubtless considered it the most important. It is, however, by no means necessary to follow him through the long exposition of his principle, in order to disprove the result to which it leads. I think we shall be justified by his own arguments for assuming opinions directly opposite to his.

prohibitives sont des impôts dont les étrangers sont seulement chargés de faire l'avance et que les nationaux sont forcés ensuite de rembourser à un très-haut intérêt.

“ Les lois prohibitives n'atteignent que momentanément le commerce général ; elles retombent et pèsent avec durée sur le commerce national et sur la consommation locale.”—  
Page 194.

It

It is his opinion that the researches hitherto made in political economy, are all imperfect, and the conclusions drawn from them erroneous: that no method has been discovered of estimating the real wealth of nations, and that the only one which would lead to a true result, is impracticable in the present state of the science: that the volumes which have been written on the finances and resources of Great Britain, are not even approximations to the truth; that they are the offspring of party, the labours of men who have framed ingenious hypotheses to arrive at predetermined conclusions; a labyrinth of figures, tables, and comparative statements, with which the partisans of England have the assurance to affront the most incontrovertible principles: “*I firmly believe,*” says he, “*that Mr. Gentz’s book, that the budgets of Mr. Pitt, that the calculations of Mess. Rose, Middleton, Beeke, &c. leave the whole question concerning the foreign and domestic commerce of Great Britain, just where they found it.*”

Having

Having thus disposed of all that stood in his way, in a very summary manner, he proceeds to establish conclusions, directly opposite to what we learn from the communications of those gentlemen ; directly opposite to the most authentic documents, and directly opposite to the common experience of every man who is capable of any discernment or discrimination. By the application of certain principles (which he explains at much length, though without any regard to order or consequence) to the social, economical, and political constitution of Great Britain, he proves, as he says, that her commerce *must* have declined, that her wealth *must* have been diminished, and that a large portion of her inhabitants *must* have been reduced to misery and want during the late war : in short, that she has been brought to the brink of ruin, while France remains unshaken and entire. He assumes that his principle is sufficient to establish the fact, even if there were no other proof of it ; but that the proofs are numberless, and therefore the fact confirms the principle.

If the refutation of the fact or principle were involved in any difficulty ; if it were necessary to bring forward many of those “ *labyrinths of figures,*” which we call authentic documents ; if, in short, he had not furnished us himself with the means of annihilating the whole fabric of his ingenuity in an instant, he would probably have remained unanswered. Who would have encountered difficulty or trouble in such a cause ?

Among the truths which are studiously intermixed with the sophisms in this dissertation on the decline of England’s prosperity and resources, there is one which Hauterive advances with peculiar emphasis, and exhibits in more than one place : he cannot therefore refuse to be judged by it ; and we require no more. These are his words : (page 263 :) “ In the social organization of modern times, the population of a country is the most infallible criterion of its prosperity.” And again (page 264), “ It is a truth beyond dispute, that a nation cannot be impoverished without being depopulated, nor depopulated without being impoverished. And whenever a state preserves its  
population

population in defiance of causes that have tended to diminish it, we may rest assured that it has preserved all the sources of its real wealth." This is clear and explicit; there is not in the whole of his work a point on which he is more decided. We assent, without reserve, to his position, and desire no better grounds for demonstrating the falsehood of his assertions with respect to this country: *fas est et ab hoste doceri*. To the *major* which he has given us, we need only apply the result of the late population returns \* as a *minor*, and leave to him or any man of common sense to draw the inference.

As for the inestimable advantages, the immense resources, the happy constitution, and the simple organization of *France*, which he contrasts with the artificial system and exhausted state of this country, we are not desirous of detracting from them. A few years will prove whether he has reasoned right; and should the result exceed his most sanguine expectations, England will never have cause to lament or dread

\* Vide Appendix, No. III.

the prosperity and security of her neighbour: we stand upon too broad a basis to envy the happiness of other nations; the riches of France can never make us poor. We cannot however but observe, that, if France be really so protected by her situation, so fertile in her soil, so rich in the industry, and so secure in the valour of her sons, Europe has the greater reason to complain of her conduct, and to execrate her politics. If rich, why did she go forth to rob and plunder others less opulent? If above want of every kind, what tempted her to seize upon the property, and trample on the liberties of her neighbours? If her position and resources render her independent of the friendship, and impenetrable to the hostility of all the world, why do we see her unprofitable ambition pulling down all the humbler edifices around, to add unnecessary buttresses to a fabric so perfect and so solid?

In the commencement of the chapter of his work now before us, Mr. Hauterive lays down as a general rule, that “the population, industry, riches, and power of a nation, are perpetually

ally acting and re-acting on each other, so that the changes in any of these elements affect the state of the whole, and that they rise and fall, increase or diminish, together.

But it became necessary for him to shew how England is an exception to this rule, when he had proved (as he assumes) that the *commerce*, *industry*, and *wealth* of this kingdom, have been reduced to the lowest ebb ; for he does not attempt to depreciate the *public power* of Great Britain. The magnitude of our efforts by sea and land, the achievements of our fleets and armies in all parts of the world, the energy with which our extensive dominions were every where maintained, and the assistance liberally afforded to our less fortunate allies : all these were proofs of power too evident and too impressive to be overturned, like the conclusions of Mess. *Pitt*, *Gentz*, *Rose*, *Middleton*, and *Beeke*, with a single stroke of the pen. He was the more willing to allow their whole force, because, in tracing the causes of what he calls this apparent inconsistency, he



found an opportunity of demonstrating, that the return of peace would be as fatal to the public power, as the war had been disastrous to the internal strength of Great Britain.

The *power* of England, says Hauterive, has been rendered independent of the three other classes of social organization ; has even acquired new vigour and extent, while *they* were perishing or falling into decay, from the following reasons : 1<sup>st</sup>, The wonderful proficiency of the English minister in the science of borrowing. 2<sup>d</sup>, His dexterity in the art of taxation. 3<sup>d</sup>, His alliance with the monied men. 4<sup>th</sup>, A credit artificially supported ; and 5<sup>th</sup> (and principally), The state of terror and alarm in which he has kept the nation, by dwelling upon, and magnifying, the dangers of a revolution, whereby the frightened people have been compelled to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to the chimeras of his exalted imagination.

These

These are, in substance\*, the several sources from whence England is said to have been enabled to make those efforts that have astonished the world, while they have exhausted herself. But as the chief of these were created by, and only available in a period of extraordinary difficulty and alarm; as nothing but the urgency of real or imaginary danger could call forth the immense supplies which were the lever of this momentary power; so the termination of the war, it was said, would cut off these resources, and with the cessation of the cause there would be an end of the effects: at the peace, the passions of men would naturally subside; credit would be placed upon its former footing; capital would follow the spirit of adventure into the usual

\* I say in substance, because they are not expressed either in these words, or in this order. The Author has reasoned at great length on each of them; but it would far exceed the bounds of a Preface to follow his reasoning. The public may, however, expect to see them more fully and ably discussed; for I have been informed, since these sheets were sent to the press, that Sir Francis d'Ivernois has undertaken the refutation of that part of Mr. Hauterive's work which has not been answered by Mr. Geutz.

channels ; and the British government, abandoned by its late supports, would be left poor, destitute, and impotent.

Once more ; had it required many words, or any research, to disprove such arguments, they would probably have been left for ever unanswered. But as we have now arrived at the period to which his predictions refer, we may pass sentence in a few words upon the principles that gave birth to them.

If Mr. Hauterive be right in his construction of the power of the English government, the peace must have put an end to the greater part of it ; since the credit of the British minister must have expired on the 1st of October 1801, with all the causes which till then supported it. He has explicitly declared, that it never could “ survive that day, which would dispel the *fascinations produced by the dangers and alarms of the war*. Then the system of credit will necessarily be altered ; the new basis upon which it will seek to establish itself, will be more conducive to the general

neral welfare, but will cease to support the public treasury."

Thus peace is the experiment which was to verify or disprove his hypothesis ; we have now enjoyed that blessing nearly eight months, and his whole system crumbles into atoms beneath the evidence of experience. If the phenomena which he has endeavoured to explain, have existed, and continue to exist when the causes have long ceased to which he refers them, we must conclude that he has not known, or has not disclosed, the true sources and foundation of their being.

It is unnecessary to say more on this subject ; we have brought the question to a point where every man may immediately decide upon it. The British financial operations of the present year must be known to a writer accustomed to watch the *English budgets*\* so attentively ; and we might therefore fairly leave it to himself to pronounce

\* Vide Appendix, No. III.

between us. The *public power* of Great Britain is not the artificial machine he has described; it is solid and secure beyond that of any nation in the world, *France*, surely, not excepted\*.

We

\* It is scarcely credible that Hauterive should have ventured to compare the future prospects of France with those of England, on the ground of public credit; and that he should have given the preference to the former, because, says he, "her national debt is a burden of 3,000,000 sterling only, and one half of that consists of annuities." He should have added: This is not what she *owes*, but what she has agreed *to pay*; and the violation of public faith, which reduced her *annual charge* to this sum of 3,000,000 sterling, added much more to its real weight than it took from its nominal value. It may appear paradoxical to assert, that the French national debt, at the highest pitch to which it ever attained, would be a more easy burden now, if it had been faithfully maintained, than is the comparatively small sum which remains of it; but every person who considers the nature of public credit will allow it to be true. It is by the violation of its engagements, by the breach of public faith, that a government contracts the most intolerable burdens, and dries up the most plentiful resources; and that of France might support and provide for a debt five times as great as what she now acknowledges, with infinitely greater ease, if she had not sported with the confidence of her creditors. The annual charge of the national debt of Great Britain is about 22,500,000*l.*; and it will not be denied, that she discharges this with less difficulty and pressure than the French do their 3,000,000*l.*: but had she only violated her engagements in a single instance, had she  
defrauded

We have thus refuted two positions on which our Author values himself very much, and to establish which, is among the primary objects of his design. We have extorted from himself the proofs we wanted to shew, that the *commerce, revenues, and population* of England, have not been

defrauded her most insignificant creditor of the most trifling claims, she would now, perhaps, be labouring under all the financial distresses of France.

I cannot help submitting the following statement to my readers: it is an exact account of the liquidation of an acknowledged claim upon the French government:

Suppose the claim to be for £50,000 *tournois*, or French livres, which, according to the *scale of depreciation*, may be ascertained to be worth 9000. Of these 9000 livres one third is paid in *rentes provisoires*, a fund now worth about 48 per cent. and the remaining two thirds is paid in *bons deux tiers*, another fund, worth, according to the last quotations,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or 50 sols for a hundred livres: the account will then stand thus:

3000 livres, at $47\frac{1}{2}$ a 48 per cent.	-	1440 livres.
6000 ditto, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.	- -	150 ditto.
<hr/> 9000		<hr/> 1590 livres.

These *rentes provisoires* and *bons deux tiers* are to be funded in the *Tiers consolidés* (a 5 per cent. fund, now worth about 57 per cent.) one year after the peace. At this rate, liquidated claims on the French government are worth little more than one sixth of their nominal value.

*The claims of foreigners, of whatever nation, on the British government, are paid without deduction of a single farthing.*

diminished by the war ; and that her *public power* has not been created and supported by it.

But when we say that the war has not produced the effects assigned to it by this writer, either one way or the other, we do not wish to be supposed among the number of those who conceive it to have been a source of prosperity and gain to this country. Because England has flourished *during* (I should say, *notwithstanding*) the war, the error has sometimes obtained, that she actually prospered by the war : an opinion which has been studiously circulated by our enemies in support of their attempts to lay all the miseries and bloodshed in Europe to our charge, by persuading the world that we continued the war for our commercial interests. No : while the proofs are numberless, that the wealth and commerce of Great Britain have rapidly increased even in this period of disastrous hostility ; the arguments are likewise irresistible by which it is maintained that it must have tended to diminish them. That they have not been diminished, that they have actually increased, is, because the principle of their growth  
has

has proved superior to the causes that counteracted it ; but those causes have nevertheless had their effect ; and great as we now are, we must have been much greater if they had never existed.

—Lætis hunc numina rebus,  
Crescendi posuere modum.

But if any man be disposed to lament this loss of the opportunity of gain, and to regret the part we have taken in the war ; let him for a moment consider the objects we have secured, and the dangers we have avoided. Let him, while the remembrance of what has passed is yet fresh in his mind, retrace the last ten years of the histories of France and England ; let him contrast the present situation, and compare the future prospects of the two countries ; and he will hardly fail to set a just value upon the vessel which has weathered such a storm, and the wisdom which has guided the helm. The alarm that has so long agitated every member of society, who could or would appreciate the blessings of law and order, has now, in part, subsided ; and we are left at liberty to contemplate the awful effects of the tempest we have happily escaped. Unwilling to



insult our neighbours with our pity, we cannot, however, suppress the sigh which the spectacle of their ruin must draw from every philanthropic breast, whatever its political affections or opinions. Whoever seriously considers the present state of France, the morals, the habits, the social and political existence of her altered sons,

*Præteritæ memor flebit, metuentque futuri.*

May the efforts of her present government, if its intentions be such as it professes, prove successful ! may it succeed in re-establishing all those sacred institutions which France so wantonly sacrificed ; and which we have maintained at the expense of so much blood and treasure against her attempts to reduce us to the level of her own misery ! All this, however, must be the work of some time ; at present we can only wish for such improvements. The boasted regeneration of philosophic France has produced a civil and political nondescript, whose infancy has been marked by the extremes of external violence, and internal corruption ; and we have yet to learn if its progress and maturity will be more compatible

compatible with the safety and tranquillity of the world.

I have endeavoured, in the preceding observations, to point out the inconsistency and absurdity of some of Mr. Hauterive's principal attacks upon this country. I must now resign him to abler hands. Mr. Gentz, in his *Defence of Europe*, has undertaken a much more elaborate refutation of his doctrines; and I trust it will be owned that he has established the reverse of what is set forth in the *Etat de la France*. I need say nothing of the abilities of Mr. Gentz: they are well known to the public in this country, by his work on the finances and resources of Great Britain; a work whose intrinsic merit has conferred on its author a very high rank among writers on the same subject, but which excites our admiration in a superior degree, when we consider the circumstances under which it was produced. We are astonished that a native of Germany, at a distance from all the sources of information, and unassisted by a single work of any value in his own language, should have collected

so much knowledge, and have reasoned so accurately, on the wealth and resources of this country, as to rival the very best productions of our own on a subject immediately belonging to ourselves.

Mr. Gentz has divided the following work into three Parts: the two first will be found interesting to the general politician ; the last is particularly so to the English reader. The first Part treats of the state of Europe before the French revolution ; the second describes the effects of that event, and the condition in which the continent has been left by the war to which it gave rise ; and the third is a dissertation on the present relations of France to her friends and enemies. The fourth chapter of this last division is an inquiry into the complaints which have been so generally and so loudly urged on the continent against what has been strangely called the “commercial tyranny of the English.” Mr. Gentz has here displayed the falsehood of the opinions concerning the nature and origin of our commercial superiority, which have been industriously circulated by our rivals, and too easily adopted by  
 ignorance



Ignorance or envy among the nations whom it was intended to excite against us. It will not be denied, that a refutation of such opinions is highly important to our interests ; and it is obvious that the arguments on our side must in this case acquire considerable weight from the country and character of the person who has undertaken the cause of truth and justice. It must be remembered that it is a *Prussian* writer, entirely unconnected with England, and unbiassed by national prejudice, or views of party, who vindicates the character of Great Britain, and exposes the folly of regarding her wealth and power as detrimental to the prosperity, and incompatible with the security of the rest of Europe.

With respect to the translation itself, the desire of rendering my Author with fidelity must be my apology for many of the defects that will be found in it. As strength of argument is more looked for than elegance of style in a work of this nature, I may entreat pardon for the *Germanisms* which, I fear, too frequently occur in this English version of Mr. Gentz's work.

*London, May 1802.*



# A P P E N D I X.

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## No. I.

*CONVENTION between his Britannic Majesty, and the  
Emperor of Russia, signed at St. Petersburg the  
17th June 1801.*

In the Name of the Most Holy and undivided Trinity.

THE mutual desire of his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, being not only to come to an understanding between themselves with respect to the differences which have lately interrupted the good understanding and friendly relations which subsisted between the two states; but also to prevent, by frank and precise explanations upon the navigation of their respective subjects, the renewal of similar altercations and troubles which might be the consequence of them; and the common object of the solicitude of their said Majesties being to settle, as soon as can be done, an equitable arrangement of those differences, and an inviolable determination of their principles upon the rights of neutrality, in their application to their respective monarchies, in order to unite more closely the ties of friendship and good intercourse, of which they acknowledge the utility and the benefits; have named and chosen for  
their

their plenipotentiaries, viz. his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, his said Majesty's Privy Counsellor, and his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias; and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, Sieur Nikita Count de Panin, his Privy Counsellor, Minister of State for the department of foreign affairs, present Chamberlain, Knight Grand Cross of the orders of St. Alexander Newsky, and of St. Anne of the first class, of that of St. Ferdinand, and of Merit, of the Red Eagle, and of St. Lazarus; who, after having communicated their respective full powers, and found them in good and due form, have agreed upon the following points and articles :

#### ARTICLE I.

There shall be hereafter between his Britannic Majesty and his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, their subjects, the states and countries under their dominion, good and unalterable friendship and understanding; and all the political, commercial, and other relations of common utility between the respective subjects, shall subsist as formerly, without their being disturbed or troubled in any manner whatever.

#### ARTICLE II.

His Britannic Majesty and the Emperor of all the Russias declare, that they will watch over the most rigorous execution of the prohibitions against the trade of contraband

band of their subjects with the enemies of either of the high contracting parties.

ARTICLE III.

His Britannic Majesty and his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias having resolved to place under a sufficient safeguard the freedom of commerce and navigation of their subjects, in case one of them shall be at war, whilst the other shall be neuter, have agreed :—

1. That the ships of the neutral power may navigate freely to the ports, and upon the coasts of the nations at war.

2. That the effects embarked on board neutral ships shall be free, with the exception of contraband of war, and of enemy's property ; and it is agreed not to comprise under the denomination of the latter, the merchandise of the produce, growth, or manufacture of the countries at war, which should have been acquired by the subjects of the neutral power, and should be transported for their account, which merchandise cannot be excepted in any case from the freedom granted to the flag of the said power.

3. That in order to avoid all equivocation and misunderstanding of what ought to be considered as contraband of war, his Britannic Majesty, and his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, declare, conformably to the 11th article of the treaty of commerce concluded between the two crowns on the 10th (21st)



February 1797, that they acknowledge as such the following articles only ; viz.—cannons, mortars, fire-arms, pistols, bombs, grenades, balls, bullets, firelocks, flints, matches, gunpowder, saltpetre, sulphur, cuirasses, pikes, swords, sword-belts, knapsacks, saddles and bridles ; excepting, however, the quantity of the said articles which may be necessary for the defence of the ship and of those who compose the crew ; and all other articles whatever not enumerated here shall not be reputed warlike and naval stores, nor be subject to confiscation, and of course shall pass freely, without being subjected to the smallest difficulty, unless they be considered enemy's property in the sense above specified. It is also agreed, that that which is stipulated in the present article shall not be prejudicial to the particular stipulations of one or the other crown with other powers, by which articles of a similar kind should be reserved, prohibited, or permitted.

4. That in order to determine what characterizes a blockaded port, that denomination is given only to a port where there is, by the dispositions of the power which attacks it with ships stationary, or sufficiently near, an evident danger in entering.

5. That the ships of the neutral power shall not be stopped but upon just causes and evident facts : that they be tried without delay, and that the proceeding be always uniform, prompt, and legal.

In order the better to ensure the respect due to these stipulations, dictated by the sincere desire of conciliating every

every interest, and to give a new proof of their uprightness and love of justice, the high contracting parties enter here into the most formal engagement to renew the severest prohibitions to their captains, whether of ships of war or merchantmen, to take, keep, or conceal on board their ships, any of the articles which, in the terms of the present convention, may be reputed contraband, and respectively to take care of the execution of the orders which they shall have published in their admiralities, and wherever it shall be necessary.

ARTICLE IV.

The two high contracting parties, wishing also to prevent all subject of dissension in future by limiting the right of search of merchant ships going under convoy to those cases only, in which the belligerent power might experience a real prejudice by the abuse of the neutral flag, have agreed,

1. That the right of searching merchant ships belonging to the subjects of one of the contracting powers, and navigated under convoy of a ship of war of the said power, shall only be exercised by ships of war of the belligerent party, and shall never extend to letters of marque, privateers, or other vessels, which do not belong to the royal or imperial fleet of their Majesties, but which their subjects shall have fitted out for war.

2. That the proprietors of all merchant ships belonging to the subjects of one of the contracting sovereigns, which shall be destined to sail under convoy of a

ship of war, shall be required, before they receive their sailing orders, to produce to the commander of the convoy, their passports and certificates, or sea letters, in the form annexed to the present treaty.

3. That when such ship of war, having under convoy merchant ships, shall be met with by a ship or ships of war of the other contracting party, who shall then be in a state of war, in order to avoid all disorder, they shall keep out of cannon shot, unless the state of the sea, or the place of meeting, render a nearer approach necessary; and the commander of the ship of the belligerent power shall send a boat on board the convoy, where they shall proceed reciprocally to the verification of the papers and certificates that are to prove on one part, that the ship of war is authorized to take under its escort such or such merchant ships of its nation, laden with such a cargo, and for such a port: on the other part, that the ship of war of the belligerent party belongs to the royal or imperial fleet of their Majesties.

4. This verification made, no search shall take place, if the papers are found in form, and if there exists no good motive for suspicion. In the contrary case, the commander of the neutral ship of war (being duly required thereto by the commander of the ship or ships of war of the belligerent power) is to bring to and detain his convoy during the time necessary for the search of the ships which compose it, and he shall have the faculty of naming and delegating one or more officers to assist at the search of the said ships, which shall be done in his presence on board each merchant ship, conjointly with

or:



one or more officers appointed by the commander of the ship of the belligerent party.

5. If it happen that the commander of the ship or ships of the power at war, having examined the papers found on board, and having interrogated the master and crew of the ship, shall see just and sufficient reason to detain the merchant ship, in order to proceed to an ulterior search, he shall notify such intention to the commander of the convoy, who shall have the power to order an officer to remain on board the ship thus detained, and to assist at the examination of the cause of her detention. The merchant ship shall be carried immediately to the nearest and most convenient port belonging to the belligerent power, and the ulterior search shall be carried on with all possible diligence.

#### ARTICLE V.

It is in like manner agreed, that if any merchant ship thus convoyed should be detained without just and sufficient cause, the commander of the ship or ships of war of the belligerent power shall not only be bound to make to the owners of the ship and of the cargo, a full and perfect compensation for all the losses, expenses, damages, and costs, occasioned by such a detention, but shall moreover undergo an ulterior punishment for every act of violence or other fault which he may have committed, according as the nature of the case may require. On the other hand, the convoying ship shall not be permitted, under any pretext whatsoever, to resist by force the detention of the merchant ship or ships by the ship

or ships of war of the belligerent power ; an obligation which the commander of a ship of war with convoy is not bound to observe towards letters of marque and privateers.

#### ARTICLE VI.

The high contracting parties shall give precise and efficacious orders that the judgments upon prizes made at sea shall be conformable with the rules of the most exact justice and equity ; that they shall be given by judges above suspicion, and who shall not be interested in the affair in question. The government of the respective states shall take care that the said decisions shall be speedily and duly executed, according to the forms prescribed. And in case of an unfounded detention, or other contravention to the regulations stipulated by the present article, the owners of such ship and cargo shall be allowed damages proportioned to the loss occasioned thereby. The rules to observe for these damages, and for the case of unfounded detention, as also the principles to follow for the purpose of accelerating the process, shall be the matter of additional articles, which the contracting parties agree to settle between them, and which shall have the same force and validity as if they were inserted in the present act. For this effect, their Britannic and Imperial Majesties mutually engage to put their hand to the salutary work, which may serve for the completion of these stipulations, and to communicate to each other, without delay, the views which may be suggested to them by their equal solicitude, to prevent the least grounds for dispute in future.

#### ARTICLE

## ARTICLE VII.

To obviate all the inconveniencies which may arise from the bad faith of those who avail themselves of the flag of a nation without belonging to it, it is agreed to establish for an inviolable rule, that any vessel whatever, in order to be considered as the property of the country, the flag of which it carries, must have on board the captain of the ship, and one half of the crew of the people of that country, and the papers and passports in due and perfect form ; but every vessel which shall not observe this rule, and which shall infringe the ordinances published on that head, shall lose all rights to the protection of the contracting powers.

## ARTICLE VIII.

The principles and measures adopted by the present act shall be alike applicable to all the maritime wars in which one of the two powers may be engaged, whilst the other remains neutral. These stipulations shall in consequence be regarded as permanent, and shall serve for a constant rule to the contracting powers in matters of commerce and navigation.

## ARTICLE IX.

His Majesty the King of Denmark, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, shall be immediately invited by his Imperial Majesty, in the name of the two contracting parties, to accede to the present convention, and at the same time to renew and confirm their respective treaties of commerce with his Britannic Majesty ; and

his said Majesty engages, by acts which shall have established that agreement, to render and restore to each of these powers all the prizes that have been taken from them, as well as the territories and countries under their dominion, which have been conquered by the arms of his Britannic Majesty since the rupture, in the state in which those possessions were found at the period at which the troops of his Britannic Majesty entered them. The orders of his said Majesty for the restitution of those prizes and conquests shall be immediately expedited after the exchange of the ratifications of the acts by which Sweden and Denmark shall accede to the present treaty.

ARTICLE X.

The present convention shall be ratified by the two contracting parties, and the ratifications exchanged at St. Petersburg in the space of two months at furthest, from the day of the signature.

In faith of which the respective plenipotentiaries have caused to be made two copies thereof perfectly similar, signed with their hands, and have caused the seal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Petersburg the 17<sup>th</sup> June, 1801.

(L. S.)

ST. HELENS.

(L. S.)

N. C<sup>te</sup>. DE PANIN,

*Formula*

*Formula of the Passports and Sea Letters which are to be delivered in the respective Admiralties of the States of the two High Contracting Parties, to the Ships and Vessels which shall sail from them, conformable to Article IV. of the present Treaty.*

BE it known that we have given leave and permission to N——. of the city or place of N——, master and conductor of the ship N——, belonging to N——, of the port of N——, of — tons or thereabouts, now lying in the port or harbour of N——, to sail from thence to N——, laden with N——, on account of N——, after the said ship shall have been visited before its departure in the usual manner by the officers appointed for that purpose; and the said N——, or such other as shall be vested with powers to replace him, shall be obliged to produce in every port or harbour which he shall enter with the said vessel to the officers of the place, the present license, and to carry the flag of N——, during his voyage.

In faith of which, &c.

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#### FIRST SEPARATE ARTICLE.

THE pure and magnanimous intentions of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias having already induced him to restore the vessels and goods of British subjects, which had been sequestered in Russia, his said Majesty confirms that disposition in its whole extent; and his Britannic Majesty engages himself also to give immediate orders for taking off all sequestration laid upon the Russian, Danish, and Swedish properties, detained in English ports, and to prove still more his sincere desire to terminate amicably the differences which have arisen between



Great Britain and the northern Courts ; and in order that no new incident may throw obstacles in the way of this salutary work, his Britannic Majesty binds himself to give orders to the commanders of his forces by land and sea, that the armistice now subsisting with the Courts of Denmark and Sweden shall be prolonged for a term of three months from the date of this day ; and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, guided by the same motives, undertakes, in the name of his allies, to have this armistice maintained during the said term.

This separate article shall have the same force and validity as if it were inserted word for word in the Treaty signed this day ; and the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged at the same time.

In faith of which, the respective plenipotentiaries have caused to be made two copies thereof perfectly similar, signed with their hands, and have caused the seal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Petersburg, 17 June 1801.

(L. S.)	ST. HELENS.
(L. S.)	N. C <sup>te</sup> . DE PANIN.

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#### SECOND SEPARATE ARTICLE.

THE differences and misunderstandings which subsisted between his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, being thus terminated, and the precautions taken by the present Convention not giving further  
room

room to fear that they can in future disturb the harmony and good understanding which the two high contracting parties have at heart to consolidate, their said Majesties confirm anew, by the present Convention, the treaty of commerce of the 10th February (21) 1797, of which all the stipulations are here cited, to be maintained in their whole extent.

This separate article shall have the same force and validity as if it were inserted word for word in the Treaty signed this day ; and the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged at the same time.

In faith of which the respective plenipotentiaries have caused to be made two copies thereof perfectly similar, signed with their hands, and have caused the seal of their arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Petersburg the 17 June 1801.

(L. S.)

ST. HELENS.

(L. S.)

N. C<sup>te</sup>. DE PANIN.

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DECLARATION.

**ALTHOUGH** the magnanimous intention of his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias to do full and entire justice to those British subjects who have suffered losses during the troubles which have disturbed the good intelligence between his empire and Great Britain, be already proved by facts, his Imperial Majesty, consulting solely his good faith, has moreover authorized the undersigned plenipotentiary to declare, as he does declare by these presents :

“ That

“ That all the ships, the merchandise, and the property of British subjects, which had been sequestered during the last reign in Russia, shall not only be faithfully restored to the said British subjects, or to their agents, but also that for the effects which may have been alienated in such a manner as to render it impossible for them to be restored in kind, a suitable equivalent shall be granted to the proprietors, which equivalent shall be hereafter determined according to the rules of equity.”

In faith of which we, plenipotentiary of his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, have signed the present declaration, and have caused the seal of our arms to be affixed thereto.

Done at St. Petersburg, 17 June, 1801.

(L. S.)      N. C<sup>te</sup>. DE PANIN.

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## No. II.

*ADDITIONAL ARTICLES signed at Moscow the 2<sup>o</sup>th October 1801, to the Convention between his Majesty and the Emperor of Russia, concluded at St. Petersburg the 17th June 1801.*

WHEREAS by the VIth article of the Convention concluded the 17th June 1801, between his Britannic Majesty, and his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, it was stipulated that the two high contracting parties should mutually agree on some additional articles, which  
should

should fix the regulations and principles to be observed, as well for accelerating the judicial proceedings upon captures made at sea, as for the damages which should be allowed to the owners of neutral ships and cargoes, in cases of unfounded detention, their said Majesties have named and authorized for this purpose, viz. his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, a Peer of the said United Kingdom, one of his said Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias; and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the Sieur Alexander Prince de Kourakin, his Vice Chancellor, Actual Privy Counsellor, Minister of the Council of State, Actual Chamberlain, Grand Chancellor of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and Knight of the Russian Orders of St. Andrew, of St. Alexander Newsky, and of St. Anne of the First Class; of those of Prussia, of the Black and Red Eagles; of those of Denmark, of the Danebrog, and of the Perfect Union; and Grand Cross of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem: and the Sieur Victor Count de Kotshoubey, his Actual Privy Counsellor, Minister for the Department for Foreign Affairs, Senator, Actual Chamberlain, and Knight of the Orders of St. Alexander Newsky, of St. Vladimir of the Second Class; and Commander of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem; who, in virtue of their respective full powers, have agreed upon the following articles:

#### ARTICLE I.

In case of unfounded detention, or other contravention of the established regulations, the owners of the vessel and cargo

cargo so detained shall be allowed compensation for each day's demurrage, proportionate to the loss they shall have sustained, according to the freight of the said ship, and the nature of its cargo.

#### ARTICLE II.

If the ministers of one of the high contracting parties, or any other persons accredited by the same to the belligerent power, should remonstrate against the sentence which shall have been passed by the respective courts of admiralty upon the said captures, appeal shall be made in Russia, to the Directing Senate, and in Great Britain, to his Majesty's Privy Council.

#### ARTICLE III.

Care shall be taken on both sides scrupulously to examine whether the regulations and precautions agreed upon in the present Convention have been observed, which shall be done with all possible dispatch. The two high contracting parties moreover mutually engage to adopt the most efficacious measures, in order to prevent the sentences of their several tribunals respecting captures made at sea being subject to any unnecessary delay.

#### ARTICLE IV.

The goods in litigation cannot be sold or unloaded before final judgment, without an urgent and real necessity, which shall have been proved before the Court of Admiralty, and by virtue of a commission to this effect; and the captors shall by no means be permitted to remove or take away on their own authority, either openly or clandestinely, any thing from a vessel so detained.

These additional articles, making part of the convention signed the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1801, in the names of their Britannic and Imperial Majesties, shall have the same force and validity as if they were inserted word for word in the said Convention.

In witness whereof, we the undersigned, furnished with full powers of their said Majesties, have signed, in their names, the present additional articles, and have affixed the seal of our arms thereto.

Done at Moscow, the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1801.

(L. S.)	ST. HELENS.
(L. S.)	Le Prince de KOURAKIN.
(L. S.)	Le Comte de KOTSCHOUBEY.

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*DECLARATION explanatory of the Second Section of the Third Article of the Convention, concluded at Petersburg the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1801, between his Majesty and the Emperor of Russia, signed at Moscow the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1801.*

IN order to prevent any doubt or misunderstanding with regard to the contents of the second section of the third article of the Convention concluded the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1801, between his Britannic Majesty, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the said high contracting parties have agreed and declare, that the freedom of commerce and navigation granted by the said article

to the subjects of a neutral power, does not authorize them to carry, in time of war, the produce or merchandise of the colonies of the belligerent power direct to the continental possessions, nor *vice versa*, from the mother-country to the enemies' colonies; but that the said subjects are however to enjoy the same advantages and facilities in this commerce as are enjoyed by the most favoured nations, and especially by the United States of America.

In witness whereof, we, plenipotentiaries of their said Majesties, have signed the present declaration, and have affixed the seals of our arms thereto.

At Moscow, the 20th October 1801.

(L. S.) ST. HELENS.

(L. S.) Le Prince de KOURAKIN.

(L. S.) Le Comte de KOTSCHUBEY.

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*ACT of ACCESSION of his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway to the Convention of the 17th June 1801, and Acceptance of his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

In the Name of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, having, in pursuance of their mutual desire to terminate, in the most equitable manner, the differences which had arisen between them, as well as between Great Britain and the other maritime powers  
of

of the North, respecting the navigation of their respective subjects, concluded a Convention, signed by their plenipotentiaries at St. Petersburg, the 1<sup>st</sup> June of the present year: and their common solicitude extending itself not only to prevent similar altercations in future, and the troubles which might result therefrom, by establishing and applying the principles and rights of neutrality in the respective monarchies, but also to render this system common and equally advantageous to the maritime powers of the North; it was stipulated by the ninth article of the said Convention, that his Danish Majesty should be invited by his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, in the name of the high contracting parties, to accede to the said Convention; and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, animated with the same sentiments of conciliation and peace, and desirous of removing every thing which has interrupted, or might hereafter interrupt, the good understanding between their Britannic and Danish Majesties, and to re-establish fully on its former footing the ancient harmony, and state of things, such as they existed by his Danish Majesty's treaties, and conventions with Great Britain, his said Majesty has not hesitated to listen to the invitation made to him to accede to the said Convention, signed at St. Petersburg the 1<sup>st</sup> June last.

To effect this salutary purpose, and to give to this act of accession, and to the acceptance of his Britannic Majesty, every possible authenticity, and every accustomed solemnity, their said Majesties have named for their plenipotentiaries, viz. his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne

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Lord



Lord Baron St. Helens, a Peer of the said United Kingdom, one of his said Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, and his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias ; and his Majesty the King of Denmark and Norway, the Sieur Francis Xavier Joseph, Count de Dannefskiold Löwendal, Count of the Holy Roman Empire, Knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Major General in the service of his Danish Majesty, Commander of his Marine Forces, and his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias ; who, after having reciprocally exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have concluded and agreed, that all the articles of the Convention concluded between his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the 17th June of the present year, as well as the separate articles annexed thereto, and the additional ones concluded the 29th October 1801, by the plenipotentiaries of their said Majesties, in all the causes, conditions, and obligations, are to be considered as having been agreed upon, done, and concluded, word for word, by their Britannic and Danish Majesties themselves, in quality of principal contracting parties, save and except the differences which result from the nature of the treaties, and engagements antecedently subsisting between England and Denmark, of which the continuance and renewal are secured by the aforesaid Convention ; and with the express stipulation on the part of the high contracting and acceding parties, that the stipulation of the second article of the additional articles, signed

at Moscow the 17<sup>th</sup> October 1801, by the plenipotentiaries of their Britannic and Imperial Majesties, which fixes that the adjudication of causes in litigation shall, in the last resort, be carried by appeal in Russia, before the Directing Senate, and in Great Britain before his Majesty's Privy Council, is to be understood, as with regard to Denmark, that the said adjudications shall be there carried by appeal before the Supreme Tribunal of that kingdom.

In order to prevent any inaccuracy, it has been agreed that the said Convention, signed the 17<sup>th</sup> June, the separate articles annexed thereto, and the additional ones concluded the 17<sup>th</sup> October 1801, should be inserted here, word for word.

[Fiat insertio.]

In consequence of all which, his Majesty the King of Denmark accedes, by virtue of the present act, to the said Convention, and to the said separate and additional articles, such as they are herein-before transcribed, without any exception or reserve, declaring, and promising to fulfil all the clauses, conditions, and obligations thereof, as far as regards himself; and his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland accepts the present accession of his Danish Majesty, and in like manner promises, on his part, to fulfil all the articles, clauses, and conditions contained in the said Convention, and the separate and additional articles herein-before inserted, without any exception or reserve.

The ratifications of the present Act of Accession, and Acceptance, shall be exchanged in the space of two months, or sooner if possible; and the stipulations of the said Convention shall, at the same time, be carried into execution as speedily as possible, regard being had to the full and entire re-establishment of the state of things, such as it was before the period of the misunderstandings which are now so happily terminated.

In witness whereof, we the undersigned, by virtue of our full powers, have signed the present act, and have thereunto affixed the seal of our arms.

Done at Moscow the 24<sup>th</sup> October 1801.

(L. S.) ST. HELENS.

(L. S.) F. X. J. C<sup>te</sup>. de DANNESKJOLD-LOWENDAL.



*ACT of ACCESSION of his Majesty the King of Sweden, to the Convention of the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1801, and Acceptance of his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

In the Name of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.

HIS Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, having terminated, by a Convention concluded at St. Petersburg the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1801, the differences which had arisen between them respecting the  
rights

rights of neutral navigation in time of war, and his Majesty the King of Sweden, equally induced by the desire of removing and conciliating the dissensions which existed on the same subject between his Britannic Majesty and himself, having consented, in consequence of the invitation that has been made to him, to accede to the above-mentioned Convention; their said Majesties have chosen and named as their plenipotentiaries to this effect, viz.—His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Alleyne Lord Baron St. Helens, Peer of the said United Kingdom, one of his Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council, and his Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to his Majesty the Emperor of the Russias; and his Majesty the King of Sweden, the Sieur Baron Louis Bogissas Christopher Court de Stedingk, one of the Lords of the Kingdom of Sweden, his Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, Lieutenant General of his Armies, Chamberlain, Knight and Commander of his Orders, Knight of the Russian Order of St. Andrew, Knight Grand Cross of his Order of the Sword, Knight of those of Russia, of St. Alexander Newsky, and of St. Anne of the First Class, and Knight of the French Order of Military Merit; who, after having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have concluded and agreed upon what follows:—

#### ARTICLE I.

His Majesty the King of Sweden accedes by the present transaction with his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom

Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to the Convention which was concluded between his said Majesty and the Emperor of all the Russias, the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1801, as well as to the first separate article annexed thereto, and to the additional ones concluded on the 2<sup>d</sup> October 1801, promising and engaging to observe and fulfil all the stipulations, clauses, and articles therein contained, in the same manner as if his Majesty had been a principal contracting party thereto, save and except the differences which result from the tenour of the treaties and engagements existing between England and Sweden, and which are to be renewed and confirmed in virtue of the aforesaid Convention.

#### ARTICLE II.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland acknowledges on his side; his Majesty the King of Sweden as a contracting party in the Convention concluded at Petersburgh the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1801, and binds himself in the most formal manner to observe, execute, and fulfil, to their utmost extent, in whatever regards his said Majesty, the stipulations, clauses, and articles of the said Convention, and of the said first separate article, and of the additional ones ; save and except the differences which result from the tenour of the treaties and engagements existing between England and Sweden, and which are to be renewed and confirmed in virtue of the aforesaid Convention.

ARTICLE III.

It is agreed that the adjudication, in the last resort, of causes in litigation, which, according to the second article of the aforesaid additional articles, are to be brought by appeal before his Majesty's Privy Council in Great Britain, and before the Directing Senate in Russia, shall, in Sweden, be brought by appeal before the Supreme Tribunal, in Swedish Högsta Domstolen.

ARTICLE IV.

In order to prevent any inaccuracy, it has been agreed that the said Convention, as well as the said separate and additional articles, should be inserted here word for word, and as follows:—

[Fiat insertio.]

The present A& of Accession shall be ratified in good and due form, and the ratifications exchanged at London in the space of two months, or sooner if possible, from the day of its signature.

In faith of which, we the undersigned, in virtue of our full powers, have signed the present A&, and have thereunto affixed the seal of our arms.

Done at St. Petersburg the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1802.

(L. S.)	ST. HELENS.
(L. S.)	COURT STEDINGK.











OWING to the difficulty attending the estimation of those persons who have been in the military service, it is known that in many counties the returns are generally so, in a small degree, that the account would fall very little short of the truth were supplied: as it is, however, the estimation of any former period is very uncertain. In 1757, it was calculated from the returns made to about 7,200,000, and Hauterive at the present time; concluding, perhaps, that the difference between the middle and the end of the century is amply counteracted by the effects of the war, there has been an increase of between 1 and 2 years. This would be more fully illustrated by the registers, which are most authentic, where divorces are so rare, afford an increase of population.

returned to Parliament in

Persons.		
Males.	Females.	Total.
987,935	4,343,499	8,331,434
57,178	284,368	541,546
469,188	—	469,188
1,410	—	1,410
715,711	4,627,867	9,343,578

BUT the immediate object of the present investigation. I have only to observe that the population of this country has not been diminished at the table before us will be sufficient to prove the truth of Hauterive. The marriage registers for a period of sixteen years except the year 1801 (which could not be taken into consideration) affords an opportunity of comparing the number of years of peace immediately preceding with the number of years of war. The rapid increase appears to have taken place during the period of hostility, which it is contended must be the case in all parts of Britain. The average number of years of peace is much greater than that of any of the wars which have been chosen; and there is every reason to believe that the population would have been still more remarkable in 1800, had not very materially diminished. We perceive a diminution of the population. This must be attributed to the circumstances which always tend to diminish or delay the service, by which many males were lost, and the scarcity of grain, which likewise

Wales, from 1785

Averages of 8 Years.

68,341 — Peace.

70,158 — War.

## No. IV.

*LOANS, 1793 to 1802 inclusive.*

Years.		Sum borrowed.	Rate of Interest.		
		£.	£.	s.	d.
WAR.	1793	— 4,500,000	—	4	3 4
	1794	— 11,000,000	—	4	10 1
	1795	— 18,000,000	—	4	15 9
	1796	— 18,000,000	—	4	13 2½
	— (Imperial)	7,500,000	—	4	12 6
	1797	— 18,000,000	—	5	12 6
	—	14,500,000	—	6	7 0
	— (Imperial)	1,620,000	—	6	15 10½
	1798	— 17,000,000	—	6	4 11
	1799	— 3,000,000	—	5	12 3½
	—	15,500,000	—	5	5 0
PEACE.	1800	— 20,500,000	—	4	12 2½
	1801	— 28,000,000	—	5	5 5½
	—	—	—	—	—
PEACE.	1801	— 8,500,000	—	4	16 9
	1802	— 25,000,000	—	3	18 1½
	—	— 1,500,000	—	3	16 9

There would be much to observe on this account, unparalleled in the history of nations, if we were speaking of the resources of Great Britain in general. But our object was only to shew that Hauterive has mistaken the nature of those resources, since he has supposed that at the peace there would be an end of them ; that he is ignorant of the foundation of Public Credit in this country, since he has attributed it entirely to the effect of terror and alarm ; and that his hopes have been too sanguine, if he has expected to see the strength of Great Britain diminished by a peace with France.



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ON THE

STATE OF EUROPE

BEFORE AND AFTER THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

&c. &c.

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THE object of the work we are now about to examine, is no other than to show, that *Europe* is in future to be indebted to the beneficial influence of *France* for the maintenance of all peace and security, and for the preservation of its social and political constitution : that, on account of her situation, her relations to other powers, and the principles of her present government, *France* can desire and aim at nothing else than the common welfare of all nations, the independence and stability of all governments ; and that her political and military greatness, her natural and acquired riches, her

2

present



present system of administration, and the advantages of a constitution according with the manners and inclinations of her inhabitants, furnish her abundant means not only to maintain the position she now occupies, but to protect and regulate the nations around her ; to establish and preserve the equilibrium among them ; and, in short, to become and continue the common centre of a system composed of all the states of Europe.

To arrive at this result, the Author leads us gradually through a series of historical and political reflections, the substance of which is contained in the following propositions ; some of them actually laid down by himself, and the others immediately deducible from his reasoning.

1st, That, at the commencement of the French revolution, there existed no effective law of nations, and no good system of government ; that authority was guided by no established maxims ; and that the true principles of the political and federal constitution were neglected or forgotten.

2d, That the war afterwards waged against the French revolution, was the necessary consequence of this universal internal and external anarchy ;

anarchy; it was only the last and open effort of that destructive malady which had long been preying upon the vitals of every state, and destroying the frail fabric which supported their connexions with each other.

3d, That the event of this war has restored France to the place which she ought always to occupy, not only for the sake of her *own security*, but for the *security of all Europe*.

France is now in a situation to give Europe a new federal constitution, in which its proper place may be assigned and guaranteed to each particular state.

A part of this new and happy system has already been carried into execution, and she is prepared to continue and complete it. She is resolved to treat her allies with impartial benevolence, her enemies with equity and moderation, and the neutral powers with a due respect for their rights. She is prepared and determined to serve as a bulwark to Europe, against that single state, which, animated by private interests, is hostile throughout to the interests of the rest; which, determined by those interests, is the mover of all the dissensions and wars of Europe, and which, if it be not at length confined within

narrower limits, will not only continue to disturb the peace of all other nations, but will stifle the industry of the rest of the world, and trample on the liberties of every people.

4th, That the stability of the present internal constitution of France (the necessary foundation of its future political influence) rests upon the most extensive mass of natural, artificial, commercial, and military resources, of which any nation can boast; upon a system of administration, simple, regular, and wise; upon a happy equality between the income and expenditure of the state. It rests, moreover, upon a government exactly adapted to the social and moral condition of the country, perfectly suited to the wants and desires of its inhabitants; and, lastly, upon the talents and character of those whom this constitution has placed at the head of affairs.

Such is the spirit, such is the argumentation which pervades the work: every one who has read it with attention, will admit the justice of this representation; and the Author himself would hardly refuse to acknowledge it. A full examination of its principles will be naturally divided into four principal parts; the first of which will be *an Inquiry into the State of Europe before the*

*War*

*War of the Revolution* ; the second will treat of the *Situation of Europe during and after that War* ; the third will consider the *present Relations between France and the other European Powers* ; and the fourth will examine *the internal Constitution of the French Republic* : taking them all, however, in those points of view in which the Author has considered them.

## PART I.

*Of the political Situation of Europe before and at the breaking out of the French Revolution.*

THE question, *Is a system of public law necessary for Europe\**? (that is, a constitution among nations, founded upon treaties, and as much as possible defined and fixed by mutual compact,) seems, in the present state of the science of politics among all civilized nations, to require no further discussion. The very nature of the social constitution; the tendency of the human mind towards law and order, in preference to anarchy and confusion; the bare idea of independent states bordering on each other, sufficiently answer such a question. I may therefore, without any danger, pass over what the Author has said upon this subject; to all which I shall not hesitate to subscribe in common with every civilized being.

The following will therefore be the only questions requiring our attention in proceeding to examine the system of our Author.

\* Vide Note A.

1st, How far did the treaty of Westphalia establish, as he asserts, a system of public law in Europe ?

2d, How far have any subsequent events contributed to dissolve the system of public law, founded by the treaty of Westphalia ; particularly those events in the eighteenth century, to which the Author ascribes such pernicious effects ?

3d, Did there exist any system of public law in Europe, at the commencement of the French revolution ?

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## CHAP. I.

*How far did the Treaty of Westphalia establish a System of public Law in Europe ?*

THE two following conditions are indispensably necessary to any treaty intended to be the basis of an universal and perpetual system of public law, even were it only to comprise the nations lying within a certain large circle ; such, for example, as the extent of Europe. In the first place, it must comprehend all the states of this

circle in all their several relations ; and, in the next place, it must contain provisions, whereby all future revolutions in the internal situation and external connexions of these states should be foreseen, considered, and taken into the account of the whole political system.

It is only necessary to state these two conditions, to point out the impossibility of fulfilling them. The difficulty of defining to the satisfaction of all, in one and the same negotiation, in one and the same treaty, the various and intricate relations, wants, and pretensions of so great a number of independent nations as Europe alone contains, is evident ; and even though this difficulty should not be considered absolutely insurmountable, it will hardly be thought extraordinary that no serious attempt should yet have been made to overcome it. The treaty of Westphalia had only to encounter a part of it ; yet, seven years were consumed in negotiation before it was brought about ; and the formation and conclusion of this treaty was, and is still, esteemed a master-piece of diplomatic ability.

But even supposing that all the states of Europe could enter into such a compact, as would serve for the basis of a general federative constitution ; would ascertain all their rights, and define

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fine all their relations; yet, there would still be wanting the means of ensuring the everlasting duration of such a compact, or of providing with any degree of certainty for its future existence. The fate of empires is no less subject to vicissitude than that of individuals: owing to the inequality of their respective progress, to the unexpected growth of new branches of industry and power, to the personal and family connexions, and, still more, to the opinions, the characters, and the passions of their rulers, there must necessarily happen many changes which no human wisdom can foresee, much less provide against. Each of these changes occasions new wants, new plans, and new pretensions; endangers or destroys the former equilibrium; presents fresh difficulties to the statesman, and renders it necessary to revise the system, and define the respective rights anew. Impossible as it is for the code of laws of any nation to provide for every possible future variation in the character and manners, the civil, moral, and domestic condition of its inhabitants; even so impossible is it to establish an eternal system of public law, by means of any general treaty, however numerous the objects which it may embrace, with whatever care and ability it may have been combined.

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The treaty of Westphalia could not be expected to perform that which is beyond the reach of any treaty. It was so far from justifying such expectations, that it did not even fulfil the first condition of a compact designed to be the basis of a federative system; it did not include all the nations even then important; and still less did it embrace all the relations of the states which it did include. Indeed it was hardly possible that it should; for at the time when this peace was negotiated, the science of politics was a perfect stranger to the greater part of those important problems which presented themselves for solution in the following century; it was not then suspected how fruitful a principle of social improvement lay concealed in the darkness and confusion of those times; and the meritorious statesmen who immortalized their names by this treaty, having only the experience of the age in which they lived, contemplated the situation and wants of Europe in a comparatively confined and imperfect point of view. It did not even come within their intention, much less was it the object of their pride, to lay a solid foundation for the public law of Europe.

There can be no doubt but that the treaty of Westphalia has been misconceived, as often as it has been considered in this light. The peculiar  
merit

merit of this famous treaty, is, in fact, entirely confined to *Germany*. It was by fixing the uncertain relations between the Emperor and the states of the Empire ; by determining the extent and limits of the sovereign authority of the German princes ; by defining more accurately the competency of the tribunals of the Empire ; and, above all, by deciding, in a manner equally just and wise, the most important question at that period—the differences between the two religious parties, and assuring to each its rights, its freedom, its possessions, and its due share in the constitution of the Empire, that this treaty became a beneficial and fundamental law for *Germany* ; and such it has remained, notwithstanding the vicissitude of events, even until the moment when, according to the assertions of modern politicians, “ *there no longer existed any fundamental law or law of nations.*”

But if we proceed to consider the treaty of Westphalia as the basis of a federal system of Europe, it will come before us in a far less perfect, and, to say the truth, in a very imperfect shape. Of the nations at that time the most powerful, there were only three, viz. France, Austria, and Sweden, which took an immediate part in that treaty. Spain refused to accede to it. England was not even taken into consideration :

neither Denmark, nor Poland, nor the states of Lower Italy, had any direct share in it. Some of the most important stipulations of this treaty, the independence of Switzerland, and that of the United Provinces, were, in fact, mere formalities, since the fate of the nations to which they related, had long before that period been completely decided. Others, such as the cession of some maritime districts to Sweden, had very little influence on the great political system, or on the events of later times. In various treaties less celebrated than that of Westphalia, more considerable changes of territory and dominion, more important revolutions in the general state of politics, have been either effected or sanctioned.

Of all the articles of this treaty, the most important with respect to the general law of nations, was undoubtedly that which determined the indemnification of France; and if this article has ceased to be a fundamental law, it has certainly not been the fault of the Germans. Upon the whole, it still remained entire at the breaking out of the French revolution: but, alas! France had in the mean time given more than one melancholy example of a truth, long since well known to every statesman,—that the most solemn treaties are weak and ineffectual barriers to the passions of princes and their mi-

nisters. Twenty years had scarcely elapsed after the treaty of Westphalia, when a new war was kindled by the ambition of Lewis XIV. which occupied nearly the whole theatre of the thirty years war; and the *grand fundamental law* of 1648, was insufficient to prevent a series of violence and bloodshed, which almost every ten years called for new negotiations, and new treaties; while, to preserve entire even a fragment of the treaty of Westphalia, it became necessary to support the sinking balance of Europe, by the treaties of Nimeguen, of Ryffwick, and of Rastadt: and it was *France*, and *France only*, whose conduct occasioned the necessity of such supports! It was *France alone* that offered the first violation to this sacred principle of the federal constitution of Europe!

Whoever then expected that the treaty of Westphalia would be the foundation of an universal political system to last for ever, must have expected more from it than any treaty ever could fulfil. It has effected all that it could or was intended to perform: and, what is more, its fundamental principles have endured longer, and with less alteration, than has, perhaps, been the case with respect to any other treaty. Among its fundamental principles, however, I only reckon those which immediately refer to the *constitution*

*Situation of the German Empire*, and those which regard the relations between *France* and *Germany*. Before we can determine what subsequent events have overturned or materially endangered the treaty of *Westphalia*, we must proceed to examine how far either of these fundamental articles have been affected by them.

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## CHAP. II.

*How far has the Treaty of Westphalia been subverted by subsequent Events ?*

**AFTER** having decided in the foregoing chapter, in what sense the treaty of *Westphalia* could be called the foundation of a federal constitution, and pointed out what was properly *fundamental* in that celebrated compact ; we now come to inquire, how far the changes which have since happened in Europe, have tended to weaken or destroy it, and particularly those three events to which the Author principally ascribes such effects.—These are, 1st, The formation (as the Author calls it) of a new empire in the north of Europe ; or, more properly, *the intervention of this northern empire in the intercourse and relations of the rest* ; 2d, *The elevation of Prussia to a power*  
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*of the highest rank ; 3d, The rise and progress of the commercial and colonial system.*

The civilization of Russia, and the intervention of this powerful empire in the federative connexions of Europe, could not but produce very great and important effects on the whole political system. These effects, like most of the changes which happen on the great theatre of the world, have been in some respects beneficial, in others pernicious.

The progress of civilization among nations before immersed in barbarism, is obviously a very important advantage, not only to those whom it immediately affects, but to the general mass of civilized mankind. It multiplies the points of contact among men ; it enlarges the sphere of their connexions, their activity, and their knowledge ; opens a new field to industry and commerce, and creates additional opportunities of communicating ideas. Taken in this point of view, the advantages are incalculable which have arisen to Europe from the *civilization of the Russian empire* ; which is, perhaps, the greatest event after the discovery of America, in the history of modern times. This empire has established a new connexion between the most civilized, and some of the most uncultivated, though in themselves the richest and  
most

most fertile parts of the world. The way has been opened by Russia, which will in future lead Europeans into the interior of Asia; and we have now the pleasing prospect of one day seeing those happy regions (the cradle of all civilization, perhaps in every sense of the word, the cradle of the human race) returning to a participation of all those truly valuable blessings which have so long been withheld from them. Lastly, the Russian empire has for ever removed and placed in the remotest degree of possibility, the danger of a future irruption of the barbarous nations into Europe; which, not very long ago, was a subject of apprehension to many an enlightened friend of humanity.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied, that the formation of this new empire has served to render the political relations of states more intricate, and their combinations more difficult; to multiply plans and counter plans, pretensions and oppositions; wars offensive and defensive; and to give a new impulse to that restless activity which so particularly distinguishes the present times. The desire of the Russian princes to obtain an immediate influence in the federal arrangement of Europe, incited them to many bold measures, which filled their neighbours with anxiety and consternation; alarmed the more powerful

powerful for the balance of Europe, and made the weaker nations tremble for their very existence. The plans of conquest and partition, of which a great part must be laid to the account of this empire, were less hurtful in their immediate, than in their remote consequences. They attacked the foundations of all political and social security; they loosened and invalidated all principles; they made it doubtful whether the law of nations was not an empty name, invented as a cloak for power, and secretly despised by the powerful: they were the model, the pretence, and the excuse for all future usurpations; and so much did they corrupt the public opinion, that the terms, *sound policy, system of equilibrium, maintenance or restoration of the balance of power*, were too often applied, to what, in fact, was only an abuse of power, or the exercise of arbitrary will.

But none of the changes produced by Russia in the political relations of Europe, were within the sphere of the system founded and established by the treaty of Westphalia. They related almost exclusively to the northern states, and to the fate of Poland and Turkey. The two great fundamental articles of that treaty, the *internal political organization of the German empire*, and



*the relations between France and Germany*, were not in the least affected by them.

The Russian monarchs endeavoured, indeed, on more than one occasion, to procure a certain degree of influence in the domestic affairs of the German empire. But until the commencement of the French revolution (and we must not forget that hitherto we have only been speaking of the time which elapsed between the treaty of Westphalia, and that great event), their efforts remained entirely without success. Those who are acquainted with the history of the present times, will remember with what determined opposition the greater part of the German states encountered the pretensions of Russia to the title of *guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia*, which she claimed by a forced interpretation of a passage in the *treaty of Teschen*; and that too at a time when the maintenance of the constitution founded on that treaty, was become extremely problematical, and when it was well known that the intentions of Russia were to *preserve*, and not to destroy it.

The relations existing between *France and Germany*, suffered no alteration whatever from the aggrandizement of Russia. They rather received

celved from this event, a greater degree of consistency than they had ever before possessed: for as the attention and politics of the two great states of Germany, especially of Austria, were always principally, and often exclusively directed towards the undertakings of Russia; France had on her part the less to dread from theirs

It may on the whole be safely asserted, that, of all the leading states of Europe, France was the least endangered by the increasing greatness of Russia; and that, under certain conditions, that event would have been less prejudicial to her than to any other. If we except the relations of commerce (which the French government, if it had known and attended to its own interests, might have cultivated as well as the English\*), there was no immediate point of contact between France and Russia; and so far was the mere existence of the latter power from disturbing the political system of Europe to the disadvantage of France, that, on the contrary, it strengthened in a considerable degree, the just and beneficial influence of the cabinet of Versailles, in the relations of all the western and southern states. Considered in this light, she was a tacit and uniform,

\* The treaty concluded at Petersburg in 1787, by an able negotiator on the part of France, is a sufficient proof of this.

though negative guarantee of the system established or confirmed by the treaty of Westphalia, instead of contributing to its dissolution.

It must be confessed that even those distant revolutions which Russia projected in Turkey, and actually accomplished in Poland, could not be indifferent to France : but it was owing to accidental circumstances, and to the weakness and mistakes of those who then managed the affairs of that country, that those revolutions could be attempted, and in a certain degree executed. It is now well known and generally acknowledged, that the partition of Poland might have been prevented by the timely interference of France ; and that Austria herself would have opposed that partition, if the French ministry had not expressly declared that they beheld it with indifference. It is no less certain, that France might have prevented the breaking out of the last war with Turkey, or otherwise have powerfully supported the Ottoman Porte, had not the beginning of her internal dissensions at that time, weakened her efforts, and diminished her influence.

The intervention of Russia in the political constitution of Europe, is not, therefore, one of the events which have weakened the principles of  
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that constitution, and undermined the groundwork of the federal system. The most important provisions of the treaty of Westphalia remained unaltered ; France, in particular, continued exactly in the situation in which she had been placed by that peace, and by the subsequent treaties which confirmed or modified it. The general political relations were, indeed, rendered more extensive and more intricate, but were not irreparably overturned, or materially and necessarily disturbed by the intervention of Russia : on the contrary, it is certain, that if the advantages to be derived from this new weight had been attended to with wisdom, the law of nations, and the federal constitution of Europe, would have received from it an additional support, and the means of bringing them nearer to perfection.

*The elevation of Prussia from a subordinate state to a power of the first rank and influence in Europe,* is the second of those events to which the Author ascribes the dissolution of the system founded on the treaty of Westphalia, with all the evil consequences, in his opinion, resulting therefrom. This event has certainly produced a more material and decisive effect upon the two principal objects of the treaty of Westphalia, than the aggrandizement of Russia. It has occasioned great changes in the internal condition of Germany ;

and likewise materially altered the relations between France and the German empire. The only remaining question is, whether, after having candidly considered these changes in a proper point of view, we shall pronounce them prejudicial; and whether they can, with any appearance of truth, be reckoned among those which have confounded, disordered, and overturned the public law of Europe; have converted it into a chaos of contradiction and anarchy, and at length put an end to its existence. Before we answer this question, we must turn our attention to those consequences which the Author derives from the elevation of Prussia; partly with respect to the fate of *Germany in particular*, partly with regard to the political state of *Europe in general*.

With respect to the affairs of the German empire, the following are the effects it is said to have produced.

1st. It is asserted that “the disputes between the Emperor and the states of the Empire, have more frequently occasioned war.” This assertion is contradicted by history, provided we do not confound the *formation* of the greatness of Prussia with its *consequences*. The first of these was certainly accompanied by one of the most destructive

wars of the eighteenth century. But since the time when Prussia rose triumphant out of that war, not only has she never once disturbed the peace of Germany, but, on the contrary, has by turns protected the rights, and reconciled the differences of the smaller states by her great preponderance in a considerable part of the Empire. If we except the short campaign of 1778 (in which she was evidently engaged with views of *preservation*, not of *destruction*), Prussia has not once taken arms in any of the disputes between the states of the Empire. From the year 1763, to the present day, no dissensions among the German princes, or between the chief of the Empire and its members, have terminated in open war : and so little has the power of Prussia tended to sow division in Germany, that, on the contrary, many domestic quarrels have been amicably concluded by its intervention.

2d. That “ *France* has been estranged from the interests of the *German empire*, and the *German empire* from those of *France*.” This undoubtedly has been the consequence of the increased influence of Prussia : but have its effects in this instance been prejudicial ? If France was not ambitious of *ruling* in Germany, there were only two reasonable objects which she could seek to obtain by her arms, or her treaties ; *secu-*

*rity for herself, and protection to the weaker princes of the Empire, against the attempts of the more powerful, particularly of the Emperor.* That the safety of the French frontiers has not been endangered by the elevation of Prussia, is a truth sufficiently confirmed by experience; and the greatness of the Prussian monarchy has even proved an additional and very considerable security to France, against Austria, the most powerful state of the Empire. But that with respect to the protection to be given to the smaller states of the Empire, the part should now be allotted to *Prussia* which had hitherto been acted by *France*, was certainly a fortunate change for those countries themselves; and if judged according to the true principles of politics, by no means an unfavourable one for France. She was now at liberty to devote to other undertakings, the force which had formerly been employed in giving this protection. She might now banish for ever from among the objects of her political attention, all anxiety for the fate of Germany, and every dread of the preponderance of Austria: the only justifiable motives for her interference in the thirty years war. If France had nothing more in view than her own safety and the protection of Germany, in her endeavours to maintain the treaty of Westphalia; if she did not seek (in contradiction to all the principles of just and liberal

liberal politics) to make her influence in the Empire a pretence and a cloak for ambitious plans of usurpation ; she could not but consider the elevation of Prussia as an event in every respect advantageous to her ; and as the surest and most natural guarantee of the treaty of Westphalia : because it created a power always ready and able to resist every attempt injurious to the constitution.

3d. That “ *the disputes on the constitution of the Empire being no longer adjusted by a third party, have been decided by force, and by the agreements or arbitrary will of the most powerful.*” The interference of a *third party* cannot surely be advantageous to any constitution in the disputes that may arise on the interpretation of its provisions ; and history refutes the assertion, that force alone has prevailed in the Empire since France ceased to take a part in its internal affairs. The truth is, that the office of umpire, which France so often exercised with partiality, and so seldom for the advantage of the whole, became superfluous by the elevation of Prussia ; and that since that event an *internal* protector of the German constitution has taken the place of a *foreign* one : but if ever the question should arise, whether FRANCE or PRUSSIA be the most proper guarantee of any great national interest ?

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no true and well-informed friend of the German constitution could hesitate a moment to which to give the preference.

But, even supposing the great influence which France possessed in the affairs of Germany to have been beneficial to the Empire, and agreeable to the general system of politics (which, after the preceding observations, I never can assent to), it must not be forgotten that the loss of this influence to France was the effect of her own choice. It was not when the King of Prussia rose to be a formidable rival of the greatness of Austria; but from the moment when the French ministry formed a new alliance with the Emperor, that the connexion between France and the princes of Germany was dissolved for ever. The treaty of 1756 has been often represented, even by enlightened statesmen before the revolution, and by a multitude of very violent, and often very ignorant writers since that period, as the first cause of the weakness and decay of the French monarchy\*. All that we can say of the judgments of those statesmen, and of the declamations of these authors, is, that their ideas are highly exaggerated. Although true policy may have much to urge against the treaty of 1756, and still more perhaps against the time

\* Vide note B.

at which it was concluded ; it is, nevertheless, false (being in evident contradiction to history) that this treaty was a positive evil for France. A great part of the bad consequences attributed to it, must be deduced from very different sources ; and those who blame the measure, seem quite to have forgotten the great advantages France derived from it. However that may be, the treaty of 1750 was a formal renunciation on the part of the French ministry of the office of umpire in the affairs of Germany ; the name at least of which it had till then endeavoured to support. France could not possibly be at the same time the confederate of the Emperor, and the ally of the Empire against an abuse of power on the part of the Emperor. If, determined by motives of political prudence, France chose to prefer the certain advantages of an alliance with Austria to the doubtful benefit of a protecting influence in the Empire, she surely has no right to complain of the loss of it. It was her own determination, her own policy, the immediate consequence of a change in her own system, and not the elevation of Prussia, or certainly not that alone, which deprived France of the part she once had in the internal affairs of Germany.

4th. That “ *the PROTESTANT LEAGUE no longer retains, as such, even the name which denoted* ”

*noted a community of rights and interests; and having assumed that of the power whose influence supplanted France, it is now only known by the title of the PRUSSIAN PARTY."* Here the Author evidently lays down, as the consequence of a single event, what is in fact the result of much greater and more general changes. The Protestant party has certainly not suffered in the least in its rights and liberties, or lost any of its weight in the general affairs of the Empire since Prussia has been its patron. The diminution of its natural weight by the aggrandizement of that power, would be a very extraordinary and incomprehensible phenomenon. So far as there still exists in Germany a distinct Protestant interest, that interest must necessarily find itself more secure under the protection of a powerful Protestant state, intimately connected with it, than under that of a foreign power; only occasionally active in its behalf; a power, which, while defending this Protestant party, was acting in open contradiction to its own principles of internal policy; a power whose support often secretly disgusted the most determined enemies of the Imperial court: as no one could help observing, that it persecuted with fire and sword at home the religion it protected in Germany. The advantage to the Protestant states

of exchanging the support of such a power for that of Prussia, was surely undeniable.

But it was not without reason that I expressed myself doubtfully as to the existence of a distinct Protestant interest in Germany. If it should be asserted that the Protestant party scarcely continues to exist even in name, the assertion would be at variance with the history of the present times, with the actual situation of the Empire and its present constitution. But it is certain, that much, very much, perhaps the greater part of what formerly characterized its existence, has been lost in the revolutions of society. It is the spirit of the times alone which has brought about these changes, and not the elevation of Prussia, which would rather have had a contrary tendency. The differences of religion have lost the importance which was formerly attached to them: the deep shades they cast upon the face of society, a century ago, are now softened down. Opinions and articles of faith, which in former times have armed one half of Europe against the other, are now looked upon with coldness and indifference: the slightest political connexion binds men and states more firmly now than all the professions of religion in the world; and without entering here into any comparison of the merits of what

now

now interests us, and of the objects that formerly used to agitate mankind, and occasion the most important events ; it is a truth established by history, that the manners, interests, politics, factions, and enthusiasm, the wisdom and folly of the present, are not those of former times.

I think I have proved that the consequences of the aggrandizement of Prussia, with respect to the *internal relations of Germany*, and *those which formerly existed between France and the Empire*, are either not such as the Author describes them, or ought certainly not to be considered so unfavourable as he appears to think them. I conceive the constitution established by the treaty of Westphalia, as far as it was in its nature capable of it, to have derived additional confirmation and support from the elevation of Prussia ; and it now remains for me to examine, whether the influence of that event upon the general system of Europe, has, in fact, been so detrimental as the Author's representation would incline us to believe.

Because Prussia, in order to improve, and afterwards to maintain her situation, had recourse to a new system of war and government ; because she invented new tactics, and had recourse to the art of accumulating treasures ; and because  
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fear or jealousy induced the surrounding nations to adopt, on their parts, the same instruments of power ; therefore, it is said, has Prussia, by her principles and example, been the cause of those unnatural efforts, and of that total enervation of all the European states which has been the consequence thereof. To maintain great armies, and to fill their coffers, they oppressed their subjects so much by levies of men and money, excited such universal discontent, and strained all the springs of power so immoderately, as to occasion the general disorder which ensued, and “ *of which the war against the revolution was only the last result.* ”

Whether this statement of the case is really true ; whether the general efforts were so overstrained ; the oppression so intolerable ; the debility so great and universal ; and whether the revolution, with the war excited against it, was really the consequence thereof, will be examined in another place. The question here, is only, whether, and how far all these effects, if they do exist, and so far as they are supposed to exist, have been occasioned by the elevation of Prussia.

It is evident that Prussia, with a territory comparatively small, and intersected on all sides,
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could never have risen to a state of the highest rank, and been able to maintain herself there, without new and extraordinary resources. Whether the system of amassing treasure, and that of military conscription, are the best, according to general speculative ideas, is a question I have nothing to do with. The situation, the wants, and the objects of *Prussia* considered, they were wise and useful for her. For *Prussia* they laid the foundations of a power which she could otherwise never have attained ; of a greatness, not merely dazzling and transitory, but solid and durable : and, what is more, the example of *Prussia* has proved, that a truly good administration, that a high degree of industry and wealth, that the prosperity of the state, and the happiness of individuals, are by no means incompatible with such foundations of power. *Prussia* has really united them all : a fact which must put every theory to silence. At the breaking out of the French revolution (for that is still the period to which all our considerations are at present directed) there existed no state in Europe, at once so powerful and so happy as that of *Prussia* ; governed with so much energy and wisdom ; so prepared for every foreign undertaking, and so safe from all internal commotion ; so capable of the greatest exertions, and so guarded against all disorganization. If it be true that *Prussia* pointed out to  
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all Europe the way to ruin, it must at least be confessed, that it took great care not to be itself the first to proceed upon it.

This ruin did not, however, originate in imprudent and untimely imitations of the Prussian system of administration. Such an assertion is immediately refuted by history. The first and principal part of that system, the *amassing of treasure*, was not imitated by any one power of the first rank,—was not even attempted. And though certain forms of military conscription, and particular principles of tactics, may in some instances have found imitators, it is nevertheless an undeniable fact, that every thing which essentially characterizes these methods, has remained exclusively peculiar to Prussia. The strength of the Prussian army was in due proportion to the rank and influence universally conceded to that state since the seven years war ; nor did it give occasion to any unnatural efforts even among its immediate neighbours, much less in countries at a distance from it.

If it be really true, that many governments in the eighteenth century exceeded their strength in the efforts they made, the cause of this evil must be looked for in more early and less remarkable revolutions. The origin of the extensive mili-  
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tary system, and, of course, of all the consequences resulting from it, is to be found in *France*. The mighty armies, the brilliant administration, the splendid enterprises, the resources, and the system of finance of Louis XIV. were models for all the states of Europe. At the time of the elevation of Prussia, the system founded by Louis XIV. had arrived at maturity ; the great outlines were laid down which every nation was obliged to fill, in order to maintain its importance in the general system. It is the most remarkable circumstance in the fate of Prussia, that she was exalted by the superior genius of one man, to a situation which seemed to have been originally denied to her. As soon as she had attained this place, there no longer remained any choice with respect to her future conduct ; she was compelled to find the means of maintaining it in a lasting and honourable manner.

But if we take a more comprehensive view of this subject, we shall find ourselves much inclined to acquit even Louis XIV. of the greater part of those reproaches which the shortightedness of the present age has so abundantly heaped upon him. It was not Louis XIV. but the natural course of things, that produced those great armies—that enlarged system of administration—those extensive political plans. They were necessary

cessary consequences of the progress of civil society. In proportion to the advancement of civilization of industry and riches among nations, the measure of their wants, their desires, their expenses, their domestic and public existence, is increased ; the sphere of their activity, their propensity to extend their limits, the ambition and the power of their governments, are enlarged. A rich individual has more servants, more houses, more horses, more plans, and more caprices than a poor one : a rich and cultivated people have more public institutions, more ministers of state, more soldiers, more luxury, and a greater spirit of enterprise, than one which is poor and uncivilized. This is all in the natural order of things. There may, no doubt, exist in the most opulent nation, a dangerous disproportion between the means and the will ; between the strength and the desires of such a people ; and, especially, the military force, that great instrument of influence and dominion, may be out of all proportion to its foundation—the population and revenues of the country. But, whatever particular instances may be adduced of the transgression of these rules of proportion, and of the errors of some governments ; there was, on the whole, no such disproportion to be seen in general at the commencement of the revolution. The military force had advanced in a degree, and to a state, coinciding

coinciding with the progress of society. The sudden aggrandizement, the influence, and the example of the kingdom of Prussia, did not push them beyond their just and natural limits. In all human probability, the armies of the remaining nations would have been no smaller, their systems of finance no less complicated, the relations between their efforts and their strength no other than they actually were, had this new meteor never risen in the political firmament of Europe.

The elevation of Prussia has therefore, in no respect, been productive of pernicious consequences. It has in no shape tended to subvert the system established by the treaty of Westphalia. As to the first fundamental object of this treaty, the internal constitution of the empire, so far has it been from destroying it, that it has, on the contrary, more than ever confirmed and secured it. With regard to the next principal object which it had in view, the relations between France and Germany; it has occasioned no other changes in these, than such as were generally beneficial, and not essentially prejudicial to France; such as France herself desired, and contributed to effect by her own political measures. It is equally untrue, that Prussia has disturbed the general balance of Europe: she has only kept pace with  
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the continual progress made by other nations, without forcibly or unnaturally hastening it ; she has only displayed in a peculiar degree, the art of making this progress with more regularity, more order, and more firmness than others, perhaps than any others engaged in the same career.

If after all this we consider, that Prussia, from the moment when she was firmly established, became a bulwark to all the west of Europe, against the attempts of Russia, and a necessary counter-balance to that empire, after its intervention in the general affairs of Europe ; that a power so happily situated in the centre of the west, and in the midst of their principal connexions, presented a constant barrier to every violent usurpation ; that if the safety of France could require any additional support, it received a new one from the elevation of Prussia ; that the powers of Europe, if duly sensible of their true and common interests, must have found it necessary to create such a state, if fate or genius had not anticipated them ; if we further consider what extensive benefit has been produced during half a century, by the influence of a nation governed with so much energy and wisdom, with respect to the general cultivation of mankind, industry, literature, the art of government, and every thing exalted and valuable among men ; and what use-

ful lessons, what glorious examples, it has afforded to its cotemporaries, and to posterity :—it will not be easy to conceive how the elevation of Prussia can ever be ranked among the immediate, or even collateral causes of the decay and disorganization of Europe.

The third great event, which, according to the Author, invaded the system established by the treaty of Westphalia, and at length totally subverted it, was the prodigious increase of the commercial and colonial system in all parts of the world.

This event (if that may properly be called an event, which is in reality no more than a gradual and still progressive expansion of human activity) has affected the interests of society, more than any other which has taken place in the political world since the treaty of Westphalia. It has opened an immense field to the industry, the arts, the ideas, the enjoyments, and the passions of mankind : it has multiplied the instruments of power, the combinations of politics, and the objects of desire ; and by adding to the charm and splendour of dominion, it has been the cause of jealousies, dissensions, and, doubtless, of wars. It has even been the groundwork in the interior of states, of a great revolution in all the relations  
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of society. The only question is, whether, considering all this in the most comprehensive point of view, it will appear to be an evil ; and particularly, whether the maintenance of a political balance in Europe, is absolutely incompatible with all these changes ; whether the existing political constitution must necessarily have been subverted by the increased commercial and colonial system ; whether it really was so, and whether the extension of European commerce, and the multiplication of trans-European connexions, led to the decay and disorganization of all nations, and finally paved the way for their future subjection.

I shall only here examine the general relations of this question : the Author has entered upon it with a view almost exclusively to *England*, which has given him an opportunity of introducing at the beginning of his book, in a very ingenious and brilliant manner, his favourite theme :—  
 “ That during the last 150 years, England has  
 “ oppressed the industry of all other countries,  
 “ has threatened their independence, and en-  
 “ couraged their mutual dissensions ; and that,  
 “ in fact, the only danger which menaces Eu-  
 “ rope, arises from the tyrannical pretensions of  
 “ the commercial politics of GREAT BRITAIN.”  
 He has used this favourable opportunity in its utmost extent. I intend to follow a different me-

thod.—The question, What has England hitherto been in the general system of Europe? What may, or should it continue to be? or (as it has been the custom to express it of late) “ the problem, How to render the existence of the British empire compatible with the interests and existence of the remaining states?” is, without doubt, one of the most important which at the present moment can occupy the politician. It is on this account that it appears most advisable to me, to unite, as much as possible, under one head, all that relates to this great question, which I shall endeavour to comprise and arrange in some general points of view, in a chapter devoted to the present relations of the leading powers. I promise, however, in the mean time, not to pass over a single observation of any consequence made by the Author; nor to leave unexamined any argument to be found in his work.

It is my opinion, that the extension of the commercial and colonial system cannot have been a *necessary* cause of the subversion of the federal constitution of Europe, and that it could only have proved the *accidental* cause of such a subversion, by means of accidental errors or misfortunes, which might in any other circumstances have been made or experienced. This rests upon the following grounds :

1st. The commercial and colonial system has not disordered the fundamental articles of the treaty of Westphalia. This point, after what has been said in the preceding pages, will not require an elaborate investigation. The groundwork of the German constitution was hardly in any respect affected by the extension of the system of commerce; neither did it occasion any important alteration in the relations between France and Germany. The new relations which it created, were all of them such as had never been thought of at the treaty of Westphalia; such as were then neither foreseen nor conjectured; and such as in every respect were beyond the sphere of the system of public law, established by that treaty. Of these unavoidable circumstances, those only can complain who consider the treaty of Westphalia as the foundation of a general federal constitution, which it never was, nor ever could be. That which it did really establish, remained entire to the end of the eighteenth century; but it was not in human wisdom to make regulations for what did not exist at the time.

2d. The extension of the commercial and colonial system was not the immediate effect of the avarice or ambition of any particular European state; it was a general, necessary, and  
unavoidable



unavoidable result of the expansion of the human mind; and every event derived from that source, must be, in some way, compatible with the objects of social existence, and of course with the maintenance and security of a federal constitution and a law of nations.

I am here engaged in the discussion of a particular object, and not writing a general history of human nature. But whoever has thoroughly investigated this subject, will readily allow me, that, in a state of society, the different branches of human activity are gradually and successively developed, each at its proper period; that when agriculture and manufactures have arrived at a certain degree of perfection, the desire of foreign commerce is naturally awakened; that although the object of this propensity may be retarded or accelerated by adverse or favourable circumstances, the persevering activity of mankind will sooner or later accomplish it; that it will at length gain access to distant and unexplored regions, and succeed in its unremitted endeavours to connect all the parts of the earth; that the produce of remote countries becomes a new spur to industry, and industry, so excited, explores and cultivates those lands; so that the productions of new regions operate to increase the activity and  
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to multiply the commercial relations of the old ; that this gives new life even to the interior of the more civilized countries, and multiplies the objects of traffic ; that industry produces riches, and riches reproduce industry ; and thus commerce at length becomes the foundation and the cement of the whole social edifice.

This is not determined by the presumption or caprice of man ; it is founded on the eternal order of human nature, and is the effect of that irrefragible impulse, by which every great and beneficial change, every truly universal and important event in the history of mankind, is produced. To this principle we must refer not only the origin but the progress and extension of commerce. Hence too the important discovery of America ; for we may confidently assert, that it could not ultimately have escaped mankind, had it not been accomplished so early by the adventurous spirit of a few extraordinary and enterprising men\*. Hence the system of commerce and colonization, with all its actual and possible ramifications and extent. Hence the independence of remote climes, not created nor cultivated for us only, and the new sources of opulence to which Europe is invited by their

\* Vide Note C.

freedom and independence. Hence too humanity will hereafter derive many invaluable blessings, will behold many a splendid æra, if the free display of this active principle be not checked by blind authority, and if human ingenuity do not aspire to be wiser than Divine Providence.

If we consider the subject in this point of view, which to me appears the only proper one, we shall not easily be persuaded to attribute the origin or the extension of the system of commerce to any particular law of any single state, or to any individual, be it Cromwell or Colbert, whom hatred or partiality shall fix upon. Adhering to the plan which I have proposed to myself, it will be the province of a subsequent chapter to prove, and I hope there to prove most satisfactorily, that the English Navigation Act is neither the only nor the principal cause of the commercial greatness of England; that this celebrated law is not rightly understood, when supposed to be creative, since its nature is, in fact, restrictive; that it is in no wise unjust, tyrannical, or hostile towards other nations; and that, when judged upon the true principles of commercial right and policy, it is nothing like “the foundation of a continued conspiracy, and an eternal warfare against the industry of all other countries.”

countries." I will return at present to my general reasoning.

If it be true that the system of commerce and colonization was one of the fruits destined to grow and ripen in the soil of society, the roots of this system must be somehow connected with those of the whole social constitution. The natural propensities of man, particularly those of which the general and constant influence determines the fate of society, are seldom found in contradiction to each other. That there should be any great spring of human action in its nature inimical to society; tending to involve nations in endless hostility; to subvert the law of nations, and even render its existence impossible; and finally to bring about the decay and ruin of empires; would be extremely unnatural, and is therefore very much to be doubted. The system of commerce, with all its errors, could not produce such effects, and in fact never has: that in some instances it has been the cause of wars, is certain; but what has not been the cause of war? That it has sometimes created discord in the federal constitution of Europe, will not be denied; but can such a constitution be expected to exist without periodical disturbances? Upon the whole, the system of commerce, with all its consequences,

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the pre-eminent riches of some countries, their naval power, their foreign possessions, and their new influence (disproportioned to the extent of their European territory), had adapted itself exceedingly well to the former social relations of Europe ; and if extraordinary and unexpected convulsions had not, from the year 1789, shaken the whole edifice to its foundations, and loosened every part of it, the question, Does there still exist a law of nations? would probably, at this time, have been absurd, notwithstanding all the changes occasioned or hastened by that system. This will, I hope, appear more plainly from the observations that will follow in the next Part of the work, in which the situation of Europe, at the commencement of the French revolution, will be more particularly discussed.

3dly. The influence of the commercial and colonial system was not confined to any particular countries ; all of them were more or less engaged in it.

The European establishments in all quarters of the world, which necessarily promoted the extension of commerce and industry, were very far from being a monopoly in the hands of the nations immediately interested in them. They were a general advantage, of which, by degrees,  
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every country in Europe received its share. Those which, by their situation and habits, were devoted to navigation, were the first to enjoy these advantages; but however desirous they might have been of preserving them exclusively, the natural course of things presented insurmountable obstacles to the accomplishment of such wishes. The vent of their produce awakened on every side, and in the most inland parts of the continent, the same activity, the same desires, and the same arts as those which stimulated, inspired, and assisted the maritime states in their undertakings. These nations were even sometimes, as in the examples of Spain and Portugal, only the channel, between whose uncultivated and unfruitful banks the enlivening stream of industry and riches flowed to happier regions. The condition of society was in every respect advanced and refined. With the wealth and improvement of individuals, the sum of those means and resources which constitute the strength of nations, was increased. All countries were benefited; but all nearly in the same proportion. The whole became more rich, more powerful, and more civilized; but the proportions between the component parts remained the same.

I do not mean to assert, that this participation of advantages arising from the system of commerce and colonization, amounted to an absolute equality among all the parties concerned. The progress must naturally have been greater and more rapid in those countries where the new seeds of industry, commerce, and riches found a soil prepared to receive them; or, where a favourable situation, the dispositions and capacities of the inhabitants, or the peculiarities of their civil and political constitution, promoted their growth in a more remarkable degree. The consequences of the general change were certainly more perceptible in France than in Germany, in England and Holland, than in Russia or Poland; and the effects produced on the proportions of their national strength, must have operated more rapidly and immediately in the former than the latter. That these inequalities should disturb the general balance, is an effect which the system of commerce only has in common with every other cause of social improvement. No federal constitution on earth can preserve the states which compose it during centuries exactly in their original relative situations. No federal constitution can ensure an unaltered continuance of the precise mass of respective strength, which was the groundwork of its formation, or even the preservation of the same proportions in the extension

sion of that mass. Even if the system of commerce had never existed, the varieties of national character and industry, the different constitutions of the states of Europe, and many accidental circumstances, would have created a diversity in their several attainments ; and accordingly the machine of government, which always follows the progress of individuals, would have been more or less complete in each. Foreign trade was only one of the many and various springs which set this great machine in motion. If commerce, with all its attendant benefits, had remained the exclusive property of a few states ; and had these favoured nations alone attained to a higher degree of civilization and wealth, and acquired despotic influence in the fate of Europe, while other countries continued in barbarism, poverty, and relative weakness ; it would then, perhaps, have been allowable to say, that the colonial system had subverted the federal constitution of Europe. But since the case is otherwise ; since, in the extensive scene of activity, industry, and opulence, which the progress of commerce has displayed, no state whatever has remained an idle spectator ; since all have taken a lively part in it, and all have been in a great, though, perhaps, not altogether equal measure, gainers by it ; it is not possible that this system

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should



should have been a cause of the general decay, or total dissolution of the federative constitution.

4thly. Even the superior advantage accruing from the *immediate* possession of commerce and colonies, was divided among several nations, and therefore established in the general balance of Europe, a new and distinct balance of the maritime and commercial states.

Nations enabled to found colonies, and monopolize their commerce ; to carry on an extensive navigation, and to supply the neighbouring states with the productions of the remotest parts of the earth, must have derived a more direct, and of course a greater benefit from the system of commerce and colonization, under circumstances otherwise equal, than those excluded by the nature of their situation from such undertakings. The fate of Spain and Portugal sufficiently evinces that this rule is not without exceptions ; for they possessed the finest colonies in the world, and yet fell into a state of poverty and decay unknown to any other continental power ; which shows, that the advantages of commerce and colonization are only conditional, depending on the industry, morals, legislation, and polity of the mother-country.

country. But where it is established under a wholesome government, and supported by the native industry, the character, and civil constitution of the country; there the system of commerce is soon productive of striking advantages. Had all these favourable circumstances been united in a single nation, it would necessarily have attained an extraordinary, and perhaps dangerous pre-eminence; but they were fortunately possessed by several at once, and particularly by three, France, England, and Holland.

It is a circumstance somewhat extraordinary, that a French writer should speak of the system of commerce and colonization in terms as if it had only benefited other nations, to the prejudice of France; as if England alone had derived advantages from it, to the detriment of the rest of Europe; and as if his own country had not been one of the most successful in the acquisition of all those advantages. If the possession of colonies, and the habits of commerce, have disturbed the general balance of Europe, it cannot have done this in a manner unfavourable to France, who had a principal share in that commerce; but, on the contrary, to her advantage, and unfavourably for the remaining states of the continent. I will say nothing here of the

trade to the *Levant*, always so large a source of industry and riches to France ; but France ruled in the *East Indies* till the middle of the eighteenth century, and even retained, when that dominion had ceased, some valuable possessions there ; France possessed the finest and most fertile provinces on the continent of *America* ; France is, even at this day, in the possession of the best of all the islands in the *West Indies*, which, in the year 1789, was equal in value to the rest of the *Antilles* taken together. It is indeed true, that the advantage derived from these great possessions, was not always equal to their importance, and that false principles and errors of administration, as well as unfortunate wars, considerably diminished their value. But France, nevertheless, long remained the first, and always continued to be the second commercial and maritime state in Europe : there was no sea unfrequented by her vessels ; no coast unoccupied by her factories and establishments ; no branch of any consequence in the whole sphere of commerce, in which she did not vie with the other maritime nations. Her navy was sometimes reduced to a comparative insignificance ; but it always recovered itself again ; and only ten years before the revolution, had arrived at such a pitch of greatness as to be able to cope with that of England. Her commerce with all  
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parts of the world was so flourishing, and the profits of it so great, that the quantity of specie in circulation generally exceeded the wants of the country ; and St. Domingo alone, upon the respectable authority of Mr. Neckar, did not add less than seventy millions per annum to the balance in bullion. Surely a man has no just ground of complaint against the system of commerce and colonization, who belongs to a nation deriving such extraordinary advantages from it.

It is not here worth while to inquire whether the ignorance or the avarice of individuals in other countries may have made them look with an evil eye on this state of things ; but it is certain, that no enlightened person in Europe could have envied France the advantages she enjoyed. That the commerce of the world should be divided between three, nearly equally favoured nations, was the most fortunate circumstance the others could have desired : it ensured to them an extensive competition ; it occasioned variety and activity in the relations of commerce ; it provided, in the most natural manner, against that abuse of power, which might have been favoured by the undivided sway of a single nation. No one will entertain a doubt, but that, had it not been for the revolution, this beneficial competition would not

easily have been destroyed; it would have lasted; it would have been still further improved; and nothing but the shocks which France has experienced in the ruin of her monarchy, could have annihilated it, as they have done for a time.

5thly. The strength which some countries derived from the system of commerce and colonization, produced a new weight in the general balance, to be occasionally opposed with advantage to the preponderance of any continental nation.

The federal constitution of nations can never be so completely organized, so carefully and exactly balanced, as to prevent every attempt to destroy the equilibrium and oppress the rest, on the part of powers invited by favourable circumstances, or impelled by enterprising princes. In these periods of danger, it is fortunate for the political system, if there exists a counterbalance of a distinct nature, which may be used to counteract the dangers of the federal constitution, and which, by a proper application, may resist the attempts of an ambitious power upon the security and independence of its neighbours.

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A counterbalance of this nature was formed as early as the end of the seventeenth century by England and Holland, in consequence of the progress of the commercial system. These two nations, that could not then vie with any of the principal states of the continent, in extent of territory, population, or military force, acquired a degree of influence and importance by their riches and naval strength, that enabled them to make head against the most powerful. They more than once defended and maintained the balance, when Europe had reason to tremble for its safety. I shall here only mention the reign of Lewis XIV. and particularly the time which elapsed between the treaties of Nimeguen and of Ryffswick ; partly because that period presents a most remarkable and instructive example, and partly because it has pleased the Author to adduce this very example in illustration of his opinions respecting the prejudicial influence of the maritime states.

His reasoning on the subject of the league of Augsbuurg in 1686, would induce us to believe, that the founder of that league only sought, wantonly, and without cause, to disturb the peace of Europe ; to weaken the French monarchy ; and, by uniting England and Holland, to concentrate in his own hands, all the springs

of that preponderating naval strength, which, 'as the author expresses himself, " had rendered his former country so dangerous to Europe."

This representation of the case appears to me not less arbitrary than new : it is certainly at variance with all former opinions concerning the relations and events of that time. Whether the Prince of Orange was influenced in secret by interested views, when he brought about the coalition of Augsbourg ; whether the desire of ascending the throne of England, or personal enmity to the King of France, were the true motives of his conduct ; are questions not to be discussed in this place. We have nothing to do with the measure of his private worth ; we are considering the public merit and political good effects of his actions. To assert that the tendency and result of his plans, the able and persevering opposition which he made to Lewis XIV. undermined the security of the federal system, and sowed the seeds of anarchy and disorder, is no less paradoxical, than it is absurd to say, that the maritime power of Holland was ever dangerous to Europe.

We need only throw a hasty glance upon the circumstances under which the league of Augsbourg was formed, to discover the object and the

the nature of that league; completely explained by the history of its origin. Lewis XIV. had not only threatened, but actually violated the integrity of all his neighbours. He had invaded the Netherlands, only eight years after the peace of the Pyrenees, and secured a considerable part of his conquests by the treaty of Aix, which nothing but the fear of the triple alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden, induced him to accede to. He had immediately after that, under a pretext still more futile, commenced a war against Holland, by which that flourishing republic was reduced to the brink of ruin. The treaty of Nimeguen increased his dominions, his influence, and the terror of his name in Europe: but this was not sufficient for his ambition; he was a conqueror in the midst of peace: by judicial sentences he adjudged to himself lands, cities, and the right of sovereignty; explained the treaty of Westphalia according to his own opinion, and forced the town of Strasburg to capitulate. Such was his conduct towards the Emperor, the Empire, Spain, the Italian princes; and thus did he force all his neighbours, whatever might otherwise be their principles or opinions, to seek protection in common measures, against a common enemy.

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By proceedings of another, though not less odious nature, he awakened the spirit of religion, so powerful at that time in a considerable part of Europe. The revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the cruel persecution of the Protestants, excited the greatest anger and abhorrence in all Protestant countries ; England and Holland, especially, took the alarm ; they beheld the French monarch armed with double terrors ; one common ruin threatened their independence and their religion ; and William of Orange became what his ancestors had formerly been, the hero and guardian angel of religious and political liberty.

Under these auspices the league of Augsbург was formed ; and if ever the conduct, the plans, and the progress of any power, could justify the rest in making preparations in common for the safety of the whole, that league was justified. The confederates, moreover, confined themselves strictly to the real and just object of their truly defensive alliance. The maintenance of the treaty of Westphalia was the basis of all their conferences ; the only aim which they had in view, was to compel France to be just.

The Emperor, many of the princes of the Empire, the King of Spain, the Duke of Savoy, all engaged in this confederacy. These, for the  
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most part Catholic princes, were assembled under the standard of a Protestant Stadtholder of Holland; of a prince who was on the point of driving the Catholic line of the House of Stuart from the throne of England. These facts are not a little strange and surprising, when we consider the temper of those times: but the more they are strange and wonderful, so much the more strongly do they express the danger in which the balance and independence of Europe appeared to the allies of the Prince of Orange. It was a confederacy dictated by necessity, and not a matter of choice or inclination. The allies beheld in the person of the Stadtholder, the protector of their common rights against the common enemy; they saw in the Catholic possessor of the English throne, an open or secret ally of that common enemy. All other considerations yielded to this important one. They declared themselves against the prince who favoured the disturber of the general balance; they took part with him by whose prudence and activity they were assured of its preservation\*.

That, at that time, “ *France alone* conducted herself in conformity to the true principles of the federal system, and the universal maxims of the political balance, while all other nations made no scruple of violating them,” is an assertion that

\* Vide Note D.

requires

requires no refutation ; because, to point out its falſhood in the cleareſt manner, it is only neceſſary to mention it ; and becauſe the hiſtory of thoſe times confutes it in every point. If Lewis XIV. had met with no oppoſition, the treaty of Weſtphalia would already have been an empty name at the end of the ſame century in which it was formed. To ſave the independence and federal conſtitution of Europe from total ruin, to preſerve and ſecure the general balance, was the work and the merit of the coalition of which the Prince of Orange was the founder and director.

I think I have ſufficiently proved that the extension of the commercial and colonial ſyſtem is by no means incompatible with the principles of the federal conſtitution of Europe. The nature and character of that ſyſtem contained no eſſential cauſe of any dreadful revolution ; and we are taught by experience, that, ſo far from having occaſioned ſuch an one, it has, on the contrary, added ſuch power to ſome nations, as to form a beneficial counterpoiſe ; whereby the federal conſtitution has more than once been defended againſt dangers that threatened its ſecurity.

The influence of the ſyſtem of commerce and colonization in the improvement and aggrandizement of the maritime ſtates, was not, therefore  
(any

(any more than the elevation of Ruffia and Pruffia), a caufe of the diffolution of the federal union, and of the fubverfion of public law. Thefe three great events of the eighteenth century have had important confequences, but have no connection whatever with thofe affumed by the Author. If the condition of Europe at the breaking out of the French revolution, was really fo desperate as he has painted it, we muft fearch elfewhere for the caufe of that misfortune.

If I have been fuccefsful in attempting to fhew that hiftory does not confirm the Author's affertion of the influence of thofe three events; and that a due confideration of their immediate and remote confequences, will even juftify conclufions almoft directly oppofite to his; I conceive that I have already made much progrefs againft the groundwork of his fystem: the affertion, "that at the time of the revolution there no longer exifted a veftige of the law of nations, and that Europe was on every fide in a ftate of the greateft diforder." For if thofe events from which he endeavours to deduce and explain this general diforganization, neither have had, nor in their nature could have fuch an effect; this erroneous induction gives a very fufpicious appearance to the whole fabric of his reasoning; and the well-founded fuppoftion arifes, that thefe facts may  
probably

probably never have existed at all, which such changes in the relations of the political system were incapable of producing.

But it is now time to meet that first assertion of his in a more direct manner; it is time to attack it in its leading points, and to proceed immediately to examine the question, "In what state was the federal system of Europe at the commencement of the French revolution?"

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### CH A P. III.

*Did there exist at the Beginning of the French Revolution any public Law in Europe?*

THE Author is not satisfied with giving a decided negative to this question. He goes farther, and draws a gloomy and depressing picture of the social constitution of Europe, in the last years which preceded the revolution. "It was impossible not to observe" (such are the expressions he makes use of), "that there had long since ceased to exist any maxims of government, any federal union, any fixed political principles in Europe; that an imaginary principle of aggrandizement, in fact nothing more than

than a forcible, unnatural, and destructive exertion, had fascinated all governments ; that the powers of Europe were involved in general misery ; that bankruptcy stood at the door of every government ; and that a single nation, grasping at the riches of all the rest, converted the misfortune of the whole to its own exclusive advantage : that the same causes which produced the disorganization of society in France, had sown the seeds of political anarchy throughout the whole of Europe ; that the law of nations no longer existed, except in appearance ; and that the revolution was only a loud and formal annunciation of its long-determined dissolution."

It is of the greatest importance that we should examine carefully every feature of this picture. If the pencil has here been guided by truth, and if the political state of Europe, the internal and external relations of all countries, were really such ; then the French revolution will appear not only completely explained, but justified, and more than justified. It would, in that case, only be the natural end of a long series of evil, the breaking out, the decisive crisis of a disorder which had long preyed upon the constitution of society ; a violent but salutary fever in a body long diseased.

We should then cease altogether to deplore a revolution, to which we are indebted for the only chance of recovery remaining ; which discovered to us the abyss into which we were plunged, and the means of extricating ourselves ; which has convinced us of the extreme defectiveness of all our former principles of government and maxims of policy ; of all former systems of administration and public law. This revolution, then, has been a beneficial and active principle of general renovation, “ by putting to the proof the little strength which yet remained to us.” It has subverted every thing, that all might be ordered anew ; by the sufferings inflicted, it has awakened a sentiment of despair, which ought long before to have existed for our own safety ; it has made us acquainted with our situation, our wants, our dangers, our strength, and our means ; it has overwhelmed us, in order to raise us again to a more exalted state, and to secure us for ever against all future errors.

Such is the aspect of the revolution, as painted by the Author in the whole train of his reasoning. He has not expressly described it thus ; for it was a part of his plan to pass over as much as possible in silence, the *revolution itself*, and only to speak of the *war against the revolution* as of a thing altogether distinct from and independent of it.

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But I am induced to conclude, that he considered it only, or at least principally, in this point of view, by the general course of his argument, and by a number of occasional observations in different parts of his work; besides, any one who will affirm that the war against the revolution was a necessary consequence of the disordered state of civil society, will not, and cannot indeed, with any consistency, forbear to ascribe the revolution itself to the same source.

Of the whole of this account of the causes and consequences of the revolution, the two following are the only points to which I can assent: 1st, there existed in the internal, social, and domestic state of most European countries, and particularly of the French monarchy, certain discordances, such as might lead to great convulsions, and which, when those convulsions did take place, might in general be looked upon, with reason, as the preparatory causes of them; and secondly, the revolution has had the accidental good effect of discovering and pointing out, in the clearest and most impressive manner, to all governments, the imperfections existing in their former constitutions, or in the ancient federation of Europe.



On the other hand, I am convinced, and I trust that all enlightened persons will now agree with me, that the condition of Europe in the latter times preceding the revolution, was not so desperate either in a social, a domestic, or a federative point of view, as to lead immediately to violent convulsions, or to render such convulsions desirable; that the French revolution, though facilitated, and in that sense prepared, by many social and political discordances, was by no means a necessary or unavoidable consequence of the state of France, much less of Europe; that this event, with all its dreadful consequences, was occasioned by some obvious errors of the former French government—was continued and completed by the untimely zeal, the ill-advised activity, the inability, the presumption, or the wickedness of those who, in consequence of these errors, were intrusted with the direction of the public affairs—and was converted into a principle of destruction for all Europe by the improvident measures of the surrounding nations; that, far from furthering the improvement of the condition of civil and political society, this revolution, on the contrary, has interrupted and arrested its progress at a moment when it appeared particularly promising; and that, when considered in a more extensive point of view, the greatest and most lamentable of the evils which accompanied it,

it, was this : before the revolution there only needed a few wise reforms in the internal constitutions of states, and some happy combinations for ameliorating and confirming the federal system, to have raised Europe to a high degree of prosperity and happiness ; whereas now all the means of attaining to this desired object must be sought for amidst a heap of ruins, and drawn forth, as it were, from chaos again.

In this series of important truths, the principal one is that to which the reasoning of our Author immediately conducts us. That we may judge with accuracy what Europe owes to the revolution, we must, before all things, be acquainted with its situation when the revolution broke out ; we must have before our eyes the leading features, at least, of the true picture of society, as well with respect to the internal condition of states, as with regard to their external relations.

Very great improvements had been made by all the governments of Europe, in every thing relating to the management of public affairs, and the principles of administration, since the middle of the eighteenth century. As the last remains of the feudal system were abolished, the fetters were destroyed by which the hands of sovereigns had long been confined and restrained in the free

exercise of their authority. The increasing wealth of their states presented new objects for their activity, and fresh incitements to various undertakings ; while, at the same time, it afforded the means of accomplishing them. The progressive improvement of the minds of men contributed likewise to the general advancement. It has been asserted, that all the favourable changes brought about in this period, were owing to the labours of public writers. But these writers were themselves, in fact, the creatures of the general improvement ; I mean the great mass of them, those who had a wide and extensive influence on the minds of their cotemporaries ; not those men of extraordinary genius, who sometimes burst, like splendid meteors, through the deep gloom of an age of barbarism. The productions of genius only become the daily occupation of mankind, and a powerful aid of social advancement, when the increase of wealth has promoted the progress of civilization ; when the desire of more refined enjoyments has been awakened ; and, above all, when governments have attained a certain liberality of principle, and have been enlightened and improved.

Without inquiring, however, which was the first, or the last, in the chain of causes that produced these great changes, the event is clear and undeniable.

undeniable. There arose in all the principal states without exception, and more or less in most of the smaller ones, a spirit of advancement and improvement, extending to every branch of the public administration, which the body of the people communicated to the governors, and which these again re-impacted to their subjects. The necessity of a revival of the existing laws, and particularly of the criminal code, was every where felt. Measures were taken for encouraging industry, for promoting agriculture, for extending commerce: while high roads, and canals and plantations, and public edifices of every kind, began to enrich and embellish all countries. In the place of the ancient system of taxation, often oppressive and unjust, much pains were every where bestowed to introduce a more simple and equitable one, showing a better insight into the true sources of wealth and the real springs of industry. The employments of civil society were every where freed from a number of burdensome constraints; and the beneficial principle of general competition supplanted a pernicious monopoly, looked upon, in the infancy of society, as the only encouragement and reward of activity. Exclusive privileges were diminished; inequalities softened down; and the advantages of individuals made subordinate to the good of the whole. The edu-

cation of youth began every where to be attended to as a great national concern ; to become an object of the care and protection of government ; and, by the adoption of more effectual methods, to be brought nearer to the sphere of practical life.

I am far from intending to assert, that this happy progress of society was any where as perfect and consistent as I have here described it. There were still many dark and uncouth parts in the great picture of the age, from which the observer turned away with sorrow or disgust. There still appeared frequent traces of barbarism in the manners, laws, and governments of the most polished nations. The abilities and characters of the men in power, were not always proportioned to the degree of maturity and refinement which their subjects had attained, or to which their hopes and endeavours were directed. The impediments likewise arising from particular circumstances and local relations, which opposed the execution of beneficial plans, must naturally have been more frequent and considerable in some countries than in others : but the general tendency of all nations and all governments was directed to a progressive, persevering, and systematic improvement of the state of mankind, more than in any other period of ancient or modern history. The good actually accomplished,

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was not brought about, as in former, even the brightest and happiest periods of antiquity, by irregular, partial, insulated, and tranfient measures ; but with order, consistency, and method ; principles clearly understood ; having a great and lasting object in view ; and comprehending the interests of all mankind.

The most important of the causes that prepared the dreadful storms which closed the eighteenth century, will be found in this tendency to a general and always progressive reform, which constitutes the prominent and distinguishing feature of the social and political character of the age, especially in the last twenty years before the revolution. The elements of the desolating tempest were fostered, as in the natural world, in the same fertilizing atmosphere that gave a rich and wholesome nourishment, a rapid and luxuriant growth, to the noblest plants in the soil of society. The new opinions of the governed combined with the altered dispositions of the governors, to bring on this dreadful phenomenon. On the one hand, the consciousness of a higher degree of happiness and freedom, of increased strength, and of greater individual importance, produced a number of wishes, desires, and pretensions, hitherto unknown : with the increase of wealth arose discontent ; with freedom, arrogance ;

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with the progress of knowledge, the propensity to idle and extravagant speculations: a spirit of disorder, of uneasiness, and censoriousness, was the prevailing temper of all the leading states of Europe. On the other hand, those invested with power, were not always sufficiently cautious and circumspect in the reforms and alterations they wished to make. They were too hasty in the execution of their plans; they strained the springs of power till they risked their breaking; they irritated the minds of their subjects by rash and violent measures; they increased the dangerous fermentation of the times, instead of using every endeavour to appease it; they often gave ear to rash, enthusiastic, and even suspicious counsellors, who, under the seductive pretext of the general good, and of immortal fame, led them by untimely, ill-combined, chimerical projects, into a labyrinth of errors and troubles, and brought them to the brink of ruin.

It may with truth be asserted, that so far as any causes of the revolutions we have seen, may be ascribed to the condition of civil society, they will be found in that very propensity to improvement, that very progress towards perfection, which was the pride and merit of the last century. Our greatness occasioned our fall; our insatiable

insatiable desire of advancing was the cause of our enervation ; our meritorious ambition led to our present humiliation. That there no longer existed any maxims of government, any principles of politics in Europe, was not the root of the evil ; no, it was the abuse of those maxims and principles in measures too confident, too rash and enterprising, in reforms too sudden and too general at once, in attempts to rise from the safer paths of experience into regions yet untried of speculative politics. It was presumption, not indolence ; enthusiasm, not aversion to reform ; that involved Europe in all the misfortunes it has since experienced ; and led to a total disorganization, then and then only, when the real authors of those calamities received from the accidental errors of a feeble government, the signal for a general subversion.

This hasty sketch of the internal state of Europe before the revolution, is drawn with more truth than that which the Author has presented us. Every attentive observer of the progress and condition of mankind, in the last twenty years preceding that event, will admit the justice of it. But, leaving this general reasoning, we must now take a hasty view of the map of Europe ; and consider briefly, the internal state of each of its component parts during



during that period ; in order to show, by historical facts, that no nation was excluded from this bright career of amelioration and advancement ; and that the same spirit, the same propensity, were every where awakened and manifested, though not always in the same manner and degree.

Russia experienced its second political and moral regeneration, under the sceptre of an extraordinary woman. The thirty-four years reign of the Empress Catherine, was an almost uninterrupted series of great and important reforms in the internal state of her immense empire. It requires no extraordinary talents, no extraordinary pains, to discover many unfavourable parts in objects of such stupendous magnitude as that empire and government ; and, like many modern writers, wholly regardless of the true point of view, to represent, even now, in the darkest colours, and perhaps to turn into ridicule, a nation which a hundred years ago was buried in the deepest barbarism ; but every candid judge, if he be capable of distinguishing how much was attainable, and what means there existed of attaining it, will confess that the state of Russia, from 1780 to 1790, compared with the condition of that empire at the decease of Peter the Great,

Great, presents a difference truly astonishing. The new system of legislation of the Empress, her wise and humane regulations of police, her endeavours to promote industry, her new arrangement of the Russian dominions, her measures for ensuring the public safety, the education, the improvement, and the health of her subjects; the hospitals of different kinds which she established for the reception of the sick and poor; the unwearied zeal which she displayed in the service of the arts and sciences; the liberality of opinion, the taste, and refinement in the habits of social intercourse diffused around her throne by the influence of her own accomplished mind:—these are not symptoms of a government without energy or principles; are not indications of the decay and fall of nations. Even those restless projects of aggrandizement, which rendered the government of Catherine so dangerous to the repose of Europe, arose in a great measure (though not indeed altogether) from endeavours to carry her work to a degree of perfection, for which the time was not yet arrived. She attempted to supersede the necessity of a slow and gradual civilization of her immense empire, by bolder measures; she wanted to become a European power in the utmost extent of the word, and in the shortest way; her plans were greater than her means; she endeavoured

voured to redouble those means, that she might accomplish, in a few years, what would, perhaps, in the common course of things, require a century. The reigning character of the age appeared even in her ambition.

The AUSTRIAN monarchy, under the government of Joseph II. presented the remarkable spectacle of a severe and obstinate contest between a monarch inspired even to enthusiasm with the spirit of reform, and nations who rewarded his philanthropic zeal with ingratitude and resistance. The idea of an uniform system of legislation, of one common administration, for a state composed of so many heterogeneous parts, was indeed more like a philosophic dream, than a rational and practicable system of government. But, however blameable, this evidently proceeded from an excess of praiseworthy intentions, and was no sign of indifference to good. Those men whose interests were connected with the maintenance of ancient abuses, cried down the system of the Emperor; but all enlightened persons admired it. Posterity, more just, will at all events admire him. Many errors and much harm resulted from the hastiness of his conduct, which sometimes degenerated into violence and severity. Many of the complaints of his subjects were well founded;

he more than once sacrificed to his speculative ideas of reform, the respect due to existing rights and consecrated prejudices, which frequently border on the most solid truths, and hold by the most respectable feelings. But his undertakings were often marked with the stamp of true wisdom, and sometimes produced noble and lasting fruit. His name has been gloriously immortalized by many very important reforms in the religious, legislative, and domestic condition of his dominions, by many excellent establishments for public education, for the internal police, for the support and care of the poor and sick, and for the improvement of industry in the states he governed. It is a very remarkable circumstance, that all disturbances which arose in different parts of this monarchy, and especially the serious events in Hungary and the Netherlands, were excited by the too hasty execution of his benevolent intentions, by the impetuosity of a mind too ardent in the pursuit of the noblest objects of humanity, by the boldness of his projects of reform. If fate had permitted his successor, whose mild and peaceable disposition appeased every disturbance, and won the hearts of men at the very beginning of his reign, to finish the work undertaken by his brother; if he who exalted Tuscany to be the seat of true political wisdom, had been allowed to transport

transport his excellent administration to a more extensive theatre ; if no French revolution had arrested the progress of improvement, and blasted the blossoms of so many hopes, what might not the Austrian monarchy, under the government of Leopold and his successor, have attained to ?

The achievements of Frederick II. have been too much the objects of general observation, too often the subject of the most admired authors, not to render it unnecessary for me to dwell much upon them in this place. The world, afflicted and almost exhausted with continued wars, beheld the military talents of this extraordinary genius with dismay. It was his good fortune, by the service he rendered during twenty-three years of peace, to efface that impression. In that ever memorable period the kingdom of PRUSSIA became a noble example of order, regularity, and energy ; of fruitful industry, admirable cultivation, and true civil liberty \* : nor was the edifying example of this kingdom unproductive of good effects to others. More than one of the German princes imitated the system of government adopted by Frederick. Germany, in general, made remarkable

\* Vide Note E.

advances in every branch of public welfare, between the end of the seven years war, and the beginning of the French revolution. With the exception of a few states, kept back by the difficulties of a general reform, or by the indolence of their rulers, the improvements in administration, held up by Prussia in the north, and by Austria in the south, to the imitation of their neighbours, were every where visible in their effects. It is only necessary to advert to the prosperous state of Saxony, Brunswick, Hanover\*, Holstein, Hesse, Baden, and many of the smaller principalities, and even some of the ecclesiastical states, during the last years of that period.

The slightest glance at the affairs of the BRITISH EMPIRE, is sufficient to banish every idea of decay and disorganization. The condition of that kingdom after the American war, was the first complete demonstration of the true principles of the wealth of nations, which had remained so long unknown. The loss of her colonies was the first æra of the lasting and independent greatness of Britain. It was after the

\* The administration of this country has always been exemplary, and has implicitly followed the Prussian model, even in its military establishment.—TRANS.

year 1783 that she became conscious of her real strength, and clearly understood the true grounds upon which it rested. Until then she had more or less partaken of the errors and misconduct of the rest of Europe, derived from an imperfect knowledge of the system of commerce. She now took the lead of all, in a new career, and upon better principles. The French revolution, which interrupted the progress of all Europe, undoubtedly confined and retarded the completion of the masterly system of administration adopted in England. It is a phenomenon sufficiently extraordinary, which can only be explained by the history of its government during the preceding ten years, that Great Britain should have been able to maintain itself entire and unshaken in the dreadful war excited by that revolution\*. What it might have attained to in a continuance of peace, must be a matter of mere hypothesis ; but this hypothesis will receive a place among the clearest political truths from those who have been accustomed to study the true sources of the prosperity and strength of nations.

\* I mean to examine, and I hope completely to refute the opinion, that England has prospered *by* this war, in a subsequent chapter.

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The government of DENMARK in the same period was characterized by measures which, though less splendid, were certainly not less praiseworthy in their nature. It united, by a policy equally wise and liberal, the two extremes of all ministerial wisdom. It increased the revenue of the state, while it enriched its subjects : it confirmed its own power, while it gratified a just and reasonable love of liberty. The abolition of the last traces of villanage, the improved cultivation of the country, the wise laws enacted for fixing the relations between the peasantry and the proprietors of land, the liberty of the press, the harmony which reigned between the different orders of the state, the reciprocal confidence between the people and the throne : all these internal improvements form one of the most pleasing pictures which the page of history will have to hand down to posterity.

Though scantily endowed by nature, exhausted by the extravagant undertakings of her most celebrated princes, and fallen into decay during the destructive anarchy which immediately followed her unnatural greatness ; even SWEDEN, under the reign of Gustavus III. made evident progress towards a state of greater prosperity and stability. The restless mind of that prince embraced every branch of the public  
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welfare ;



welfare ; introduced light, order, and activity into the chaos of a disordered government ; and in the midst of many dangers and adversities, laid the foundations of a new one, upon which his successors, under more favourable circumstances, may completely organize a better system. The accounts which Gustavus, from time to time, laid before the diet, are noble proofs of his vigilance, industry, and acuteness ; and though his passions sometimes counteracted the good which was the object of his zeal, though the spirit of party ran very high during his life, and the political situation of his country was often very critical ; yet the benefit he conferred upon Sweden will long continue to be felt, and will be fully acknowledged by the judgment of an impartial posterity.

It may, perhaps, at the first glance, look somewhat like temerity, to mention the unfortunate kingdom of POLAND, in an account of the progress and improvement of the different states of Europe. But even in this retarded and neglected country, the dawn of a brighter day had begun, shortly before its dissolution, to enlighten the horizon. No essential improvement was in this instance practicable without a thorough reform of the constitution ; for the errors in the constitution were the real causes of  
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the decay and weakness of the state. This first object had, however, already occupied the attention of all thinking persons ; and the partition of 1772, with all its evil consequences, had one beneficial effect for Poland ; it pointed out, in the clearest and most impressive manner, the necessity of a great political regeneration. The patriotic zeal of the friends of a radical reform, and the general conviction of its necessity, first brought it forward as an object of public consideration, at the diet in 1788. The result of this diet is well known : the constitution of 1791 was the presage of a happier fortune, the beginning of a new state of existence, conformable to the spirit of the times, and the progress of civilization in the rest of Europe. This is not the place to review the series of events, by which this constitution was destroyed in the moment of its birth, and Poland for ever struck out of the list of nations. But there is one observation which applies immediately to my argument, and will be subscribed to without difficulty by every impartial reader acquainted with the history of modern times : had it not been for the French revolution, the constitution of 1791 would not have been destroyed, nor the political independence of Poland annihilated.

Of all the nations of Europe, SPAIN and PORTUGAL were perhaps the farthest behind in the general state of improvement. And yet the irresistible strength of that propensity to reform which actuated the most indolent governments was not altogether without effect even in these. Portugal had been awakened from her profound slumber by the administration of Pombal ; another minister like him, one prince only of an active disposition, would have freed her altogether from the fetters that encumbered her. Spain too began to understand her true interests ; and however great the difficulties she had to surmount, the resolution of encountering them was not wanting\*. Much time, and many favourable circumstances, were requisite to ameliorate the condition of a nation, whose decay was the result of causes so ancient and so deeply rooted ; but it is enough that the desire of reformation was awakened, and a resolution taken to effect it. We are not, at present, asserting the uniformity of the result, but the generality and uniformity of the impulse and exertions.

Even ITALY, so far behind all other civilized nations, in proportion to her natural strength and

\* Bourgoing's instructive work on Spain sufficiently shows that the Spanish government was not inactive or supine in the above period, though it had almost insurmountable difficulties to encounter.

advantage



advantages which seemed to have destined her to a place among the first ; even Italy had made some advances towards an improved state. The Grand Dutchy of Tuscany, transformed into a paradise by Leopold, afforded a surprising example to the world of what may be accomplished in the short space of twenty years, by a prince endowed with wisdom, activity, and perseverance. This example could not possibly remain entirely useless to the neighbouring states : even the feeble government of Rome conceived the thought of rendering itself independent of contributions from abroad, by adopting principles of prudence and economy ; and the measures of Cardinal Ruffo during the time he managed the finances of the Pope, were all founded upon that idea. Naples, a country fallen into the deepest decay, by the total neglect of every principle of government, oppressed with barbarous abuses ; and having such a constitution as rendered it almost impossible for the government to undertake any good work ; Naples began to listen to prudent counsels, employed the wisest heads to project plans of a systematic reform, and was preparing to put them in execution \*. She would, doubtless, have had to encounter the greatest difficulties in accomplishing this ; but it would have been undertaken ; and no one can with cer-

\* Vide Note F.

tainty assert, that the attempt would have been unsuccessful, had not the storm of the revolution here, as every where else, destroyed good and bad together, and renewed the chaos, out of which a happier order of things was beginning to unfold itself to our hopes.

In order to complete this review of the states of Europe, we must, in the last place, direct our attention to the central point of the revolution; the country out of which its splendid promises, and its dreadful devastations, have immediately proceeded. That the former government of FRANCE was such as stood in need of the greatest reforms; that the errors in its legislation, its administration, and its domestic constitution, were many and great, cannot for a moment be disputed. Nobody will attempt to deny that the government of Lewis the XVth laid the foundation of a dangerous disorganization. But was the reign of LEWIS XVI. from its commencement to its tragical end, a proof of the assertion, that there no longer existed any proper principles of government in Europe? Was it not rather marked throughout by the desire of beneficial reforms, the prevailing character of the times? Was not its only misfortune a misconception of its strength, which sank under the weight of its own undertakings?

Was the monarch who placed TURGOT and MALESHERBES among the number of his ministers, who twice intrusted the fate of his kingdom to the hands of NECKER, was he a patron of abuses, a blind follower of former systems? Was the *convocation of the* NOTABLES, and the plan for which they were convened, the work of mean, contemptible, obscure, and common-place politics? Was the facility, or rather the levity with which this government consented to the assembling of the States, a proof of tenacious obstinacy, or of an imprudent spirit of concession? Was the edict of the 5th July 1788, which not only established the freedom of the press, but called upon every hand that could guide a pen to employ itself in publishing plans of general utility—was that edict the measure of a court that trembled at every prospect of innovation? Was the decree of the council of state of the 27th December 1788, and the speech of the minister of finance of the 5th May 1789, and even the unfortunate declaration of the 23d May—were these the productions of a government far behind the wishes and opinions of its enlightened subjects? Is the revolution, in short, to be attributed to the want of system and principles; or, on the contrary, to the superfluity and abuse of them?

These are questions which require no answers. In France, as in the rest of Europe, "that general character of impatience, restlessness, and mutability," which the Author with justice describes as the distinguishing feature of the age, was only the necessary consequence, the expression, as it were, of a general sense of the progress already made, and the desire of further improvement. The events of the last ten years were occasioned by the too ardent and too hasty pursuit of good intentions, not by the general prevalence of corruption; and instead of admitting, that the true principles of administration were never so ill understood, we may, on the contrary, assert with confidence, that they were never so generally and extensively known and practised in any period of history; that the condition of mankind had never required so little as it then did, the violent revolution which France experienced, and of which all Europe has felt the effects; and that this revolution, instead of being the last link of a long chain of disorganization and decay, was, on the contrary, the first link of a new chain of misfortune and disorder; the signal for a general pause, perhaps relapse in the state of Europe, by a daring attempt to leave the natural cause of social improvement, and to bring it at once to perfection.

Such

Such was the state of Europe with respect to the internal condition of its several nations. Let us now proceed to examine, whether, in their political relations towards each other, there is any better foundation for the belief of that general disorganization and total want of *public law*, which are said to have existed at the time of the French revolution.

That this examination may not degenerate into empty speculation, we must, in the first place, define with precision, the meaning to be properly attached to the term, *public law*, or law of nations (*droit public*).

A law of nations, in the most extensive sense of the word, would be such a constitution as should establish all their several relations by immutable laws; assign to each the place it ought to hold in the general system, so as not to interfere with the interests of the rest; guarantee the duration of this system by a perfect equilibrium of power, and provide effectual means for preventing every undertaking of a nature to destroy that equilibrium. Such a constitution can only exist in idea, never in reality. There never has been any law of nations in this sense of the word; and it would be in vain to expect it, until the project of perpetual peace be likewise realized.



To convince ourselves that the federal constitution of nations can never be otherwise than imperfect, we need only consider the imperfection of all systems invented and established by man ; the immensity of the objects to be embraced by a code of laws, comprehending and regulating the rights of all nations ; the impenetrability of the future ; the mutability of the relations of society ; and the alterations that must necessarily take place in the course of time, in the absolute and relative strength of different states, owing to the diversity of their fortunes, the inequality of their progress, or the personal abilities of their princes. The merits of such a constitution must always be merely relative, greater or less ; and the most perfect federal system we can ever hope for, will at best only be tolerable.

Whoever takes upon him to assert, that, at a certain period, the political system was utterly corrupted, and the federal constitution either eminently defective or totally annihilated, must be able to show, that at that period there existed no guaranty of public security ; that the balance of power was entirely destroyed ; that the weaker states could no longer find refuge or protection against the usurpations of the stronger ; that one or a few of the powerful endangered the peace and security of the rest, and rendered

rendered their existence precarious ; that the disputes of nations were no longer determinable by negotiations or treaties ; and that war and force were the only resource, the only policy, the only umpire in all their differences.

Was this the state of the federative system of Europe at the commencement of the French revolution ? I should contradict my own opinion were I to hesitate a moment to confess, that at that time the political system laboured under great defects, and was pervaded by many errors ; that it was far, very far, removed from that perfect federal constitution, which we contemplate in idea ; that the balance between the principal powers was by no means secured ; and that the situation of the smaller states was in many respects dangerous and precarious. A great part of these errors and defects was the immediate consequence of the rapid civilization of Europe, by which the former proportions between the leading states were altered, and the disproportion between four or five preponderant nations on the one hand, and a great number of small, dispersed, and insignificant states on the other, was considerably augmented. This disproportion excited and encouraged many and various plans of ambition and usurpation ; and at length added to the numberless combinations of modern politics,

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the celebrated system of partition, which inflicted so deep and dangerous a wound on the federal constitution \*.

But I can never be persuaded to believe that “ at the time of the French revolution, the political system of Europe had reached the last stage of decay and disorganization; that its every prop and foundation was destroyed;” and that “ it presented nothing but imbecility, anarchy, and confusion.” The history of the twenty-five years which elapsed between the peace of Hubertsburg and Fontainebleau, and the beginning of the disturbances in France, contradicts this assertion in every respect; the most indisputable facts stand in opposition to it; the slightest glance at the situation of Europe, during that period, confirms the very reverse. The federal constitution was at least as perfect as it ever had been since the thirty years war; nay, it was even more efficient and entire. The changes which Europe had experienced in the last 150 years had been as happily and wisely grafted on the former political relations, as, from the joint operation of accident and prudence (such is the nature of every federative system), could ever have been desired or expected; the balance of power was adjusted as effectually and as favourably as a li-

\* Vide Note G.

beral and reasonable policy could desire ; and if there were some events which infringed the sacred principles of the federal constitution, they were at least avenged by the unanimous indignation, and the marked disapprobation of all cotemporaries. Europe possessed, in every reasonable sense of the word, a federative constitution, a political balance, and a law of nations.

To explain these truths, it will not be necessary to descend to a minute and particular analysis of the political relations existing at that period. It is sufficient if we dwell upon the leading features of the picture. The fate of Europe depends upon the fortunes and political relations of the powers which preponderate in the general system. If the balance be preserved among these ; if their political existence and internal organization be safely established ; if, by their mutual action and reaction, they protect and secure the independence of the smaller states (so much, at least, as the weak can be secure in a community with the strong) ; if there is no dangerous preponderance to be perceived, which threatens to oppress the rest, or to involve them in endless war ; we may rest satisfied with the federal constitution which fulfils these most essential points, notwithstanding many errors and defects. And such was the federal constitution of Europe before the French revolution.

The

The five powers which since the middle of the eighteenth century have constituted the principal weight in the general political system are, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and England. In considering the federal relations of these states, we shall have an opportunity of adverting to those of a second and third order, as well as to some of a still lower rank, so far at least as they affect the general survey of Europe.

#### FRANCE.

The external relations of a nation are agreeable to the true principles of the federal constitution, when it is completely, or in a very great degree, secured against every foreign aggression, by its natural position, or its internal strength and means of defence, or its political connexions, or all of these combined. A large, and by its nature preponderant state, must, moreover, possess a certain degree of influence on the rest, and on the political relations of Europe, to enable it to maintain its due place in the general system.

The latter of these requisites is, however, less essential than the first ; the principle upon which it is founded, is less defined, and therefore more liable to be abused by being carried to an undue and dangerous extent. The vague and equivocal

cal terms *influence, consideration, credit, &c.* are too often made the cloak of ambitious, restless, intriguing politics, which sacrifice the welfare of all nations, and even their own interests, to a chimera of imaginary superiority. But in this a proper medium is to be observed. No power in Europe, and more especially none of the leading powers, can or ought to be without a constant influence over the rest. Were it to be entirely confined within itself, and its interests altogether distinct, it would be in continual danger of seeing its interests and independence fall a sacrifice to dexterous combinations. It would degenerate into an idle, and soon contemptible spectator of the changes constantly happening in the relations of other states; it would either endanger its own security, the first and principal object of all federative policy, or be often obliged to defend in sanguinary wars, what might have been more easily and advantageously maintained by timely vigilance, by prudent negotiation, or even by that respect alone, which it might have exacted from its neighbours.

Let us now consider the political situation of France before the revolution, in both these points of view.

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The security of that nation against every attack from without, was founded partly on the internal means of defence peculiar to it, and partly on the nature of its political relations to all its neighbours.

The military and geographical situation of France was more proper to ensure the permanent security of an extensive kingdom, than any other that can be conceived ; the most advantageous that any nation in Europe could boast of ; the most excellent that has ever existed in the sphere of the modern political system. The greater part of it was bounded by the sea ; and its continental frontiers were so protected by art or nature, in every point, as to render them almost impenetrable to an enemy. On the side of Spain, and on that of Savoy, it was defended by the highest mountains in Europe ; and such was the disproportion of its strength, to that of the nations beyond those mountains, so evident was the impossibility of penetrating into the interior of France by way of the Alps or Pyrenees, that any danger of an invasion on that side must be totally out of the question. The eastern, and still more a part of its northern confines, were less protected by nature ; and being contiguous to more powerful nations, were more exposed to an attack. But here a chain of fortified places unparalleled

ralleled in its kind, and admirably combined with the natural means of defence, presented an impenetrable bulwark, sufficient to deter the most enterprising enemy. The martial spirit, the industry, and riches of the nation ; their attainments in the arts and sciences ; completed and crowned the abundance of natural and artificial means of defence. Experience had sufficiently proved that nothing was wanting to render them complete ; and the hope of conquering France had long since been banished as an empty vision\*.

To these peculiar advantages that assured the safety of France, were added (particularly in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in that period when the federal constitution is said to have been at its last gasp) all those which federative policy can combine, to give to a nation the highest possible degree of security. No power on the continent could, with any appearance of hope or reason, conceive the project of invading France : they must all have been restrained either by the evident impossibility of success, or by the slightest knowledge of their own interests. The distance of Russia, and the policy of the intermediate states, precluded any attack from that quarter. A balance of power had been formed in Germany by the elevation of Prus-

\* Vide Note H.



sia, from which France could not but derive the most essential advantage in all possible political combinations. If Austria had attempted to aggrandize herself, Prussia would have been ready to oppose her ; if Prussia had threatened France with hostility, the assistance of Austria was at hand. That power, moreover, which in the German empire had most frequently waged war with France ; from which she had the greatest reason to expect an attack ; and whose situation, above all others, gave her the means of making it ; that very power had, during an uninterrupted period of thirty years, maintained an alliance with her. She was united to Spain, on the other hand, by the closest bonds of amity. The King of Sardinia was the natural ally of France on account of his political situation, his dread of the power of Austria, and his desire of aggrandizing himself in Italy ; even though the many family connexions which united them, were to be considered as nothing. Switzerland, in all her alliances, had given a decided preference to the kings of France, and cultivated their friendship above any other. We may boldly assert that there was not a single state on the continent of Europe, which, in the situation of affairs at that time, was not impelled by the strongest motives, by some great and important interest, to seek the favour and friendship of France. Every archive,  
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every article of diplomatic correspondence, and every state paper of all the cabinets of Europe, from the time of Cardinal Fleury, to the year 1789, might be submitted to the penetrating eye of the most expert politician, without his being able to discover in them the slightest trace of a conspiracy against the interests of France, or any plan inimical to the security and independence of that kingdom.

There was only one among the greater powers whose interests were contrary to those of France, and who at the same time possessed the means of injuring her; and that was England. Some striking contrarieties in their national characters, centuries of warfare, and a long rivalry in the most important objects of true or imaginary national greatness, had abundantly sown the seeds of hatred and contention between these two nations, at once so near, and so completely separated. The sentiment of offended pride continued to irritate a wound never healed. England alone had, properly speaking, triumphed over France, in the course of the whole century, and she had, in some instances, obliged her to submit to mortifying humiliations. So numerous, moreover, were the points of contact between them; so many the objects common to the activity and ambition of both; so frequent the collision of their

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respective interests, that a state of perfect peace between them could not be of long duration.

But, with respect to the danger resulting to France from this hostile relation, it appears that the true foundation of all political independence and greatness, the security and integrity of its territory, was not invaded or materially endangered in any war with England. Colonial and commercial interests, the constant objects of contention between them, though certainly great and important, were only secondary to the above consideration ; and the danger that ensued, though serious and afflicting, was only subordinate. The true foundation of the power of France remained unshaken and unhurt, amidst the greatest misfortunes which befel her commerce, her navy, and her possessions in the East and West Indies. We have, therefore, often seen her rise quickly from the severest blows received from England, and reclaim with successful energy what she had for a moment been deprived of.

The history of the naval wars of the eighteenth century proves, besides, that the balance of power between France and England was by no means uniformly on the same side. The war which finished in the year 1762, was the most unfortunate of all for France : the peace of Fontaine-  
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bleau was the epoch of her deepest humiliation. But how was the situation of the two rivals altered in the short space of twenty years, when the French navy rose with new splendour from its ruins ; when the empire of the seas was disputed with various success by France and England ; when victory more than once settled upon the French ; and when these succeeded, against all expectation, in wresting the most important colonies in the world, out of the hands of their adversaries ! It is evident, therefore, that the power of Great Britain did present no such preponderance before the revolution, as to be a constant subject of dread and alarm to France. The security of her territory, the principal object in the relations of a state with its neighbours, was never seriously endangered by England, however formidable ; and in the proper sphere of their rivalry, their commerce, colonial interests, and naval power, the advantage was almost as often on the side of France as on that of England. To this must be added, that, in the year 1786, the first formal treaty of commerce was concluded between the two rival states, and the idea of an eternal enmity between them was gradually dying away. Since the commencement of the eighteenth century, there was no period in which the probability of a lasting peace between France and England was so great ; in which the danger

of the renewal of the war was so remote, so little to be dreaded, as at the moment when the French revolution broke out.

Such was the situation of France with respect to her *security* : let us now consider what *political influence* she enjoyed.

The influence of the cabinet of Versailles upon the affairs and fortunes of Europe, had attained its meridian in the splendid days of Lewis XIV. It declined after the peace of Ryßwick ; the war for the Spanish succession had remarkably diminished it ; and though it afterwards rose in some degree, yet it never regained the extent and greatness it possessed in more early periods. This was partly, indeed, occasioned by changes in the relative strength of the European powers ; but still more, and in one sense exclusively, by the personal character of the prince who ascended the throne after Lewis XIV. Had such changes not happened in the state of Europe, still the influence of France must have been considerably less, under the government of a peaceable and moderate, or, still more, of a weak and indolent monarch, than under the sceptre of a warlike, ambitious, active, and enterprising prince. Such is the inevitable destiny of all earthly greatness and dominion ! The brevity of human life forbids  
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the works of man to be eternal. The inheritance of an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Gengis Khan, a Gustavus Adolphus, have all of them undergone revolutions much greater than those of Lewis XIV. in the hands of his descendants.

But to determine upon principles of truth and justice, how far France experienced a real misfortune, and a cause of just complaint, in the diminution of her influence in the general system under Lewis XV. we must in the first place examine and determine what should be the proper measure of that influence ; the extent to which it ought, upon grounds of equity and general utility, to be carried. Wherever we fix the limit of the extent we assign to it, it is clear and undeniable that Lewis XIV. had gone beyond it. His arbitrary and unjust pretensions, the haughtiness with which he announced them, the terror he spread among his neighbours, the general mistrust prevailing in Europe, the alliances and coalitions so often formed and renewed, as the only recourse against his plans ; all these things sufficiently show, that his views were incompatible with the peace and safety of the rest, and in direct opposition to the laws of the federal constitution. The exhausted state in which he left his kingdom proved still more : it proved that he had exceeded his strength ; that he had sacrificed the

true interests of his country to a chimera of greatness, dominion, and fame ; that he had been in pursuit of objects, in which a more enlightened policy would have discovered no real advantage even to France. It was no misfortune for the world, it was for the happiness of France, that his successors renounced his colossal projects, his extravagant efforts, his restless interference in all the affairs of Europe. The dignity of a nation is not lowered, nor its real importance diminished, by renouncing undue pretensions to inordinate influence. It often becomes stronger in reality by what it loses in appearance. France made more important advances in every branch of public welfare, under the peaceful administration of Cardinal Fleury, than in the most brilliant times of Lewis XIV.

It is true that the excessive forbearance of the French ministry under Lewis XV. often degenerated, particularly in the latter part of his reign, into dangerous carelessness, and sometimes into total apathy ; and France permitted undertakings which it could and ought to have opposed. But it must not be said, that her influence, because neglected during this period of relaxation, was therefore annihilated. The elements of that influence existed as formerly ; a more energetic government would soon have re-established it.

The part acted by France under Lewis XVI. particularly from the beginning of the American war, to the commencement of her internal dissensions, resembled in nothing the conduct of a nation “ sunk into contempt and insignificancy, deprived of its former character, and almost forgotten in Europe.” This proved that France still possessed all that a nation of the first rank ought to possess and desire to preserve; that she still held the rank that belonged to her in the political system, on account of her internal strength and her external relations; and that of the changes in Europe, which had in the mean time taken place, there were none of a nature to diminish her legitimate influence. An impartial survey of her political situation at that time, will confirm these truths, and support them against all the sophistical declamations of discontent, or the ungrateful disregard of former advantages.

The relations between France and GERMANY since the middle of the eighteenth century, had been as favourable to the interests of France, as the most ingenious federal policy could have contrived to make them. Prussia, from the moment of her elevation, became a counterpoise to the House of Austria, incomparably more useful to France than that she was formerly obliged to create by uncertain and imperfect alliances with  
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the members of the Empire. From that time, France, in every possible conjuncture, had the choice of two allies, almost equally powerful; she was always sure of one of them. She fixed on Austria; and the consequence of that choice, so often blamed, was a peace of thirty years with Germany; thirty years of undisturbed tranquillity, on the only side exposed to an attack. We are not here to examine whether the ministry of Lewis XV. did not go too far in this new connexion; and whether its participation in the seven years war was not an impolitic measure. But it is certain, that even the alliance of the cabinet of Versailles with the House of Austria, did not prevent France from offering protection to every state threatened by the superior strength of that power; that notwithstanding, or rather on account of that alliance, she interfered as a mediatrix in the war of the succession in Bavaria, and in the contest for the opening of the Scheldt; and that till the year 1789, there was no sovereign of any consequence in Germany, not excepting the King of Prussia, who did not more or less endeavour to gain her friendship; to many of them an object of the first importance. As long as the alliance with Austria interfered not with other interests, France, with reason, adhered to it: while, on the other hand, it only depended upon herself to return to her former system, whenever

Austria

Austria should betray intentions incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe ; and that with the superior advantage now arising from the power of Prussia, and the influence of that state on the north of Germany. Surely such a situation was the very reverse of dangerous and unfavourable, and was such as France had never been placed in either before or since the treaty of Westphalia.

Since the year 1761, France had been closely connected with SPAIN. This connexion, founded upon the celebrated Family Compact, secured to France the resources, by no means unimportant, of a nation advantageously situated in her vicinity ; gave her the disposal of a fleet of eighty ships of war, and part of the treasures of Mexico and Peru. It was surely no weak, contemptible, and mistaken politics on the part of France, that procured such a powerful support at the time of her greatest adversity. That she was not obliged to submit unconditionally to the terms which England would have imposed ; that she was enabled twenty years afterwards, with the assistance of her ally, to drive her rival out of North America ; that the conduct of Spain was, during thirty years, implicitly submitted to her control ; and that she found the cabinet of Madrid disposed to renew that submission, even amid the storms  
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of the revolution : all this sufficiently shows the immense advantages derived from the family compact, which must be looked upon as one of the most important victories in the field of diplomatic policy.

The same alliance, moreover, secured to her an extensive and lasting influence in ITALY. Naples and Parma grafted their interests on those of the more powerful branches of the House of Bourbon. The forces of these two allies would have been at the entire disposal of France, in case the only power capable beside herself of disturbing Italy, had agitated plans of conquest and aggrandizement, such as to threaten the independence of that part of Europe. But we must not suppose that in such a case she could only have reckoned upon Naples and Parma ; she possessed a decided influence over the greater number, and the most important of the Italian states. The King of Sardinia, connected with France by the closest ties of amity, had been at peace with her during half a century ; he was allied by blood to the family of the Bourbons, and looked upon the French monarchs as his natural protectors against the power of Austria, the continual object of his fears. Such were likewise the relations between France and her ancient allies, the republics of Genoa and Venice. The Pope, who  
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could never be attached to the Emperor, was always more or less devoted to the interests of France. An Austrian prince was indeed upon the throne of Tuscany; but the situation of that state, its distance from the centre of the Austrian monarchy, and the distinct interests of its sovereigns, prescribed a strict neutrality as its only safety in every war between the principal powers, and obliged it even in peace to seek the favour of France. In a word, from the Alps to the island of Malta (for here likewise the politics of France prevailed), there was no point in the whole extent of Italy, except Austrian Lombardy, in which France did not alone, or more than any other European cabinet, influence the relations, and direct the conduct of all.

The authority it enjoyed during several centuries at CONSTANTINOPLE, even till the beginning of the revolution, is well known. The security of the Turkish frontiers against the undertakings of its enterprising neighbours, the principal object of this ancient alliance, equally useful to France and the Porte, had indeed in a great measure ceased to be fulfilled during the last thirty years; but this was not so much owing to the weakness of the French cabinet, and the diminution of its influence in the affairs of Europe, as to the peculiar situation of the Porte itself. The decay of the  
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the Turkish empire must be attributed to the badness of its constitution, the errors of its administration, the defects in every part of its military system, and, above all, to the increasing disproportion between the always improving governments of Europe, and the barbarous Asiatic policy of the Ottoman court. While all other nations were progressively civilized, cultivated, and enriched; Turkey, still adhering to long-exploded principles and superstitious customs, made no advance whatever. The efforts of France, and the mutual jealousies of its neighbours, long preserved it from total ruin; but the internal principle of dissolution overpowered these adventitious aids; the duration of this empire became every day more problematic, and at last its final ruin appeared to be at hand. The ministry of Lewis XV. ought certainly to have supported this important ally more effectually against the attempts of Russia; and they added to the error here committed, by abandoning the Porte entirely at the peace of 1774. But this fault is considerably lessened, and in some degree excused, by the difficulties involving a contrary conduct. The business of defending an ally so deaf to the suggestions of sound politics; so careless of the means of its own safety; so averse from and incapable of any joint undertaking, and opposed to a power so distant from France, so near  
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to itself ; would have embarrassed the boldest and most enterprising ministry. Yet, notwithstanding all the changes which happened in Europe, the influence of the French court at Constantinople remained undiminished ; and had it not been for the French revolution, it would have continued entire until the total dissolution of the Turkish empire, an event which France would certainly have spared no efforts to retard.

RUSSIA was the only leading state over which France never enjoyed any permanent influence. The reason of this is evident : their general interests in the balance of Europe, which they mutually though tacitly concurred to support, was the only important object common to the politics of France and Russia. Their principal point of contact, the interests of Turkey, was necessarily a source of constant opposition between them. England, moreover, by her great commercial connexions with Russia, had from the beginning of the eighteenth century gradually weakened, and at length almost annihilated the influence of the French court at St. Petersburg.

Notwithstanding this, however, it more than once revived when a favourable opportunity occurred ; and in the year 1787 produced an advantageous

vantageous treaty of commerce between the two nations. This treaty would indeed have been dearly purchased by France if the destruction of the Turkish empire had been the price of it. But the general system of Europe was then so happily organized, that France might safely regard that catastrophe as distant and improbable. Two powerful weights were opposed to the preponderance of Russia : Austria, if divided from it, was always ready to counteract its attempts upon Turkey ; if not, Prussia maintained the balance ; and the history of the last Turkish war sufficiently proves that Prussia was equal to the task. Thus the greatest danger which France could ever dread from Russia, was averted without any immediate effort of its own.

There was another and a very important point, on which it ought to have opposed the plans of Russia at an early period. So long as POLAND existed, an extensive influence in all the north of Europe was secured to France. The first partition of that country paved the way for its subsequent annihilation ; and France beheld that partition with unexpected indifference. This was a great and unpardonable fault ; the greater too, as France might probably have averted that blow without recourse to arms, by a decided interference only ; and perhaps by a simple negotiation

tion with Austria, who, of all the powers concerned in the partition, had the smallest interest in it, and evidently the least inclination towards the measure. The fault was so much the greater, as the partition of Poland required the most unusual of all combinations, the most dangerous to France, and at the same time that which she might the most easily have prevented—the coincidence of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. No one will attempt to justify or even excuse this fault, which sufficiently proves the profound lethargy of the French ministry in the last years of Lewis XV. : but its consequences were in reality less prejudicial to France than is commonly supposed. The formation and execution of such a plan in the very sight of France, was for her the most unfavourable circumstance attending it ; but the political discredit of that conduct could in fact only attach to the ministry and government guilty of such negligence. In the place where I shall discuss the relations of the powers concerned in that partition, I shall endeavour to prove that the treaty of 1772 neither destroyed nor materially injured the balance of Europe, so as to hurt the interests of France ; that it was even useful to her in some respects ; that her influence in Poland was still considerable ; and that the total dissolution of that kingdom, though undoubtedly prepared, was by no means decided, by the first partition.



Though France was not sufficiently active in opposing the subjection of Poland, she was, on the other hand, more successful in directing the affairs of *Sweden*, according to her own interest. An unhappy constitution, which, under the appearance of securing the prerogatives of the states, introduced faction and disorder, had, since the year 1720, deprived that kingdom of all dignity and consequence, and gradually converted it into a province of Russia. By the subversion of this constitution, the deliverance of the King of Sweden, and the restoration of that independence to the government, without which it was but a powerless faction; it was evident that Russia must be deprived of one of the chief instruments of its preponderance in the North. The French ministry accomplished this important revolution. The plan was formed at Paris; the King of Sweden was from thence directed and encouraged to this great undertaking, and relying on the friendship of France, he achieved it in a manner equally fortunate and sudden. This event, so favourable to the influence of France in the North, and so contrary to the wishes of the court of Petersburg, was brought about in the year 1772; at a time when the ministry of Versailles seemed to have reached the last stage of indolence and weakness: how can we then believe that France had ceased to hold an important place in the general system of Europe?

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What happened in Holland in the year 1787, can only be a proof of the momentary weakness, by no means of the utter decay, of the political influence of France. The changes brought about in that country by England and Prussia were certainly hostile to the interests of France. They were indeed doubly prejudicial to her : they strengthened the party which had always been in opposition to France ; and they threw the government of the United Provinces, probably for a long time, into the arms of Great Britain. But what, after all, was this mighty change, when considered in a proper light ? The momentary subjection of a party, which France had long supported ; which had often triumphed by her assistance ; and was far from being subdued for ever \*. This party, encouraged, and more than once armed, by France, had, during more than a century, made head against its rival. The latter took advantage of the moment when the violence and extravagance of its adversaries induced two great powers to offer protection to the House of Orange ; at which time the domestic troubles of France precluded the chance of any effectual opposition from her. The attempt was successful ; but the seeds of division remained ; and a few years would have shown that there still existed an Anti-orange faction and French interest in Holland,

\* Vide Note I.

even if the storms of the revolution had not so soon disclosed the true state of parties there, and the measure of their respective strength.

The revolution which took place in Holland in the year 1787, was the effect of a concurrence of circumstances, which cannot with justice be said to have occasioned any permanent change in the balance of Europe. It lowered, for a time, the political credit of the French ministry; but did not destroy it. Besides which, it does not properly belong to the period hitherto the subject of our reasoning. We are speaking of the situation of Europe before the French revolution, which, with respect to France, though not to Europe in general, had certainly commenced in the year 1787; though the scenes of that time were only preparatory to the subsequent important catastrophes.

I think I have proved,.

1st, That, during the period we have been speaking of, the political security of France was as great and as firmly established in every essential point, as could be desired or imagined; that her geographical situation, the nature of her frontiers, the magnitude of her internal resources, and even the general interests of surrounding nations,

nations, combined not only to support that security, but to ensure it in the completest manner.

2dly, That the influence of France in the federal system of Europe was fully adequate to her real, political importance; that it was diminished since the time of Lewis XIV. by so much only as it had then been carried too far; and that it was owing to the temporary errors of a weak administration, not to any unfavourable change in the balance of power, nor to a positive decrease of this influence itself, that it failed in some particular instances to operate with energy and effect.

3dly, That France, till the commencement of the revolution, was feared by all the greater powers; while her friendship and favour were sought and cultivated by most of the smaller; that her relations with Germany were more stable and advantageous than in any other period of modern history; that every apprehension Russia might occasion was sufficiently counteracted by the situation of the other powers; that her alliances, her patronage, or her policy, enabled her to govern, exclusively or principally, in all the southern states of Europe; in Spain, in the greater part of Italy, in Switzerland, and in Constantinople; and that the loss

of influence sustained by the partition of Poland in the year 1772, was repaired by a more solid and effective connexion with Sweden.

4thly and lastly, That France, considered as a maritime state, was more than once the successful rival of the only nation she had cause to fear ; that her inferiority was never permanent ; and that the last naval war in this period was the most successful and honourable she had ever waged against England.

It is this period, the peace of 1783, and the time between that and the beginning of the revolution, that we must look to in order to judge, of the consequence of France in the general system of Europe. Let those who can perceive nothing but decay and disorganization ; nothing but unnatural alliances, contempt of all laws, and neglect of all federal principles, in the latter years of the French monarchy : let them, if they have the assurance to do it, in defiance of history, and in opposition to undeniable truths, assert, that France was then degraded to a subordinate rank ; was incapable of maintaining the balance ; was abandoned, persecuted, and despised by the rest of Europe : but they should not merely assert all this ; they should prove it \*.

\* Vide Note K.

## AUSTRIA.

That dread of a dangerous preponderance on the part of this state, which from the beginning of the sixteenth, to the end of the seventeenth century, had principally influenced the politics of Europe, has been considerably diminished since the treaty of Westphalia; and especially since the wars of Lewis XIV.; from which time, whatever may have been the secret views and wishes of her sovereigns, Austria has more frequently been engaged in wars for her own preservation, and in defence of the balance of Europe, than to aggrandize herself. The most brilliant epoch in the history of this monarchy was the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the immense inheritance of Charles V. seemed about to be again united under the sceptre of its sovereigns: but the principles of the political balance prevailed against the genius of Austria and the victories of Prince Eugene; and the treaty of Utrecht placed a Bourbon on the throne of Spain\*. After the death of Charles VI. a dangerous storm gathered about the House of Austria. It was to its own firmness in the first place, and in the next to the weight which England, at this crisis, threw into the scale of the Queen of Hungary (thereby again defeating the plans of France), that Aus-

\* Vide Note L.

tria was indebted for its preservation from that danger, and for the maintenance of her rank in Europe, with the greater part, though not the whole of her possessions. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle restored the Imperial house to its former place with respect to France and the German empire; only what Prussia had wrested from it, was irretrievably lost; and the last attempt to recover it, terminated unsuccessfully, after seven years of unavailing bloodshed.

Of the principal changes in the general political system, during the eighteenth century, there have been two advantageous and two prejudicial to the power of Austria. The favourable events were,—1. The gradual enervation of the Turks, which from the time of the treaty of Passarowitz was continually progressive; and, 2dly, the alliance with France in the year 1756. The first of these changes delivered Austria from her most dangerous enemy; and thus left her free to devote to other objects, a considerable force, formerly kept in constant readiness to oppose that hostile power. The alliance with France enabled her to maintain her influence in Germany, where her authority would have been very much weakened if that power had formed a connexion with Prussia. This alliance likewise secured to Austria the undisturbed possession of a province, which, on account of its

distance from the rest, must always have been defended with difficulty, and never without great expense.

The changes prejudicial to the House of Austria, were, on the one hand, the extraordinary aggrandizement of Russia; and, on the other, the growth and consolidation of the power of Prussia. The aggrandizement of Russia diminished the beneficial effects which the decay of the Ottoman empire would otherwise have had for Austria; and this contemptible neighbour was replaced by a power, whose strength and ambition, whose activity and enterprising spirit, required the constant vigilance of the Austrian government. The elevation of Prussia was an event of the greatest importance to the Imperial house; it deprived it of one of its most valuable provinces, of half its influence in Germany, and much of its weight in Europe. The treaty of 1756 was not an adequate compensation for this loss; and it must, on the whole, be confessed, that the unfavourable changes considerably overbalanced the events that were fortunate for Austria in the eighteenth century. Her only important acquisition, after the death of Charles VI. was that part of Poland assigned to her by the treaty of 1772: but that was only an equivalent for similar augmentations to the territories of Russia and Prussia, concerted between  
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those powers. The accession of Austria to that treaty was more a matter of necessity than of choice\*.

Austria has therefore, in no instance, destroyed the balance of Europe for her own advantage. Her relative importance in the general system has rather been diminished than augmented in the last century; and because she has always been inferior to France in her geographical, political, and federal relations, as well as in her means of defence, she has suffered more from the changes that took place in the last century. Perhaps, indeed, when impartially considered, she, of all the leading powers, has the justest grounds of complaint.

The active and enterprising character of Joseph II. produced, indeed, many projects of extending his dominions, and of rounding their limits, which alarmed his neighbours, and were the subjects of heavy complaints of usurpation and ambition. But the truth is, that not one of these projects was carried into execution†; and instead of demonstrating a total

\* Vide Note M.

† “Notwithstanding the ambitious character of Joseph, he continued, during his whole reign, to be more alarmed for the safety, than gratified by the extension of his dominions.”  
—SEGUR.

want of all federative principles, and the destruction of all political equilibrium, their fate, on the contrary, affords a striking proof of the continued existence of a federal constitution, of a system neither weak nor contemptible. The first of the plans of Joseph which attained to any degree of maturity, was that which had part of Bavaria for its object. He seized the opportunity to execute it when the younger branch of the House of Wittelsbach became extinct by the death of the Elector Maximilian Joseph. The result of that undertaking is well known: the King of Prussia opposed it with arms; the courts of Prussia and France employed all the powers of negotiation to induce Austria to renounce pretensions evidently unfounded. Justice prevailed; and Austria, at the treaty of T<sup>ES</sup>CHEN, received scarcely one fifteenth of the country of which she had claimed the half. Even that trifling acquisition was purchased by consenting to wave all future objections to the succession of the King of Prussia to the Franconian principalities.

The second undertaking of the same nature was directed against Holland. The Emperor took advantage of the troubles in which a war with England had involved that republic, to set up a number of pretensions which had no foundation

ation but his will or power. He declared the barrier treaty of 1715 to be null and void ; required the limits of the Netherlands to be restored to the state in which they were before the treaty of Nimeguen ; and lastly, insisted upon the opening of the Scheldt, which Holland was accustomed to consider as a death-blow to her commerce, and which had been expressly forbidden by the treaty of Westphalia. Here was one of those cases in which the weaker can only seek refuge against the usurpation of a stronger power in the common interests of the rest, in the firmness of their opposition, in the justice and efficacy of their measures. Had there no longer existed any law of nations, no longer any federal constitution in Europe, Holland would only have had to choose between an expensive, and probably unsuccessful war, or an unconditional surrender of what constituted much of the security of her frontiers ; of Maastricht, of the sovereignty of the Scheldt, &c. Her situation was the more critical, as the very state from which Holland was naturally to expect the greatest assistance, was engaged with her antagonist in one of those " monstrous alliances," which are now said " to have destroyed the very foundations of the whole political system," and " to have delivered up the smaller states, without resource, at the mercy of the greater."

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Did the consequence really justify these sinister conclusions ? The very reverse. Notwithstanding the importance France attached to her connexion with Austria, and all the advantages she had derived from it in the American war, then just concluded ; notwithstanding the ties of blood which united the Emperor and the House of Bourbon ; France stepped forward as a mediatrix in behalf of Holland, and conducted the affairs of that state with all the impartiality and energy of the most enlightened politics\*. The Emperor was compelled to forego all his pretensions ; the Dutch preserved their frontier towns ; the Scheldt was not opened ; and the whole danger ended with the republic being obliged to pay a comparatively insignificant sum ; and even of that, France undertook to discharge a considerable part, in order to bring the matter more speedily to a conclusion.

The third great project of the Emperor was that which impelled him, in the year 1788, to declare war against the Ottoman empire. A discussion of the origin and progress of this war would be foreign to my purpose, but the termination and result of it afford the strongest and most irrefragable arguments against the assertion that, “ at the commencement of the French re-

\* Vide Note N.

volution, the balance of power was an empty term." When the Turkish war broke out, the internal dissensions of France were such as to prevent her taking any active part in foreign political relations ; yet, notwithstanding this temporary annihilation of so important a counterpoise, the plan concerted between the powers of Austria and Russia was defeated by a judicious combination of the remaining members of the federative system. The efforts of Prussia, England, and Sweden, in behalf of the Porte, prevailed to save her ; and the two powerful allies were stopped in the midst of their brilliant victories by the active and energetic politics of the mediating states. Austria restored all her conquests at the peace of Szistow. I cannot but look upon this treaty as among the most remarkable events in modern history. The utility of a system of equilibrium, the efficacy of federative principles, the triumph of negotiation over arms, have been seldom so conspicuously and so honourably displayed ; and, what is still more important to our present investigation, the date of this event is the very same at which the federative system is said to have reached the last stage of disorganization and decay—the year 1790.

## PRUSSIA.

I have spoken, in my first chapter, of the political relations of this power, and its beneficial influence on the general system of Europe ; and it is unnecessary to repeat what I there have said. There is, however, among the general observations of the Author of *L'Etat de la France*, upon the changes which have happened in the eighteenth century, one that applies more directly to Prussia than to Russia or England, and which appears to require a nearer examination,

He assures us, in the first place, that he is far from intending to condemn the efforts and success of those princes, who, taking advantage of favourable circumstances, have raised the nations under them to unexpected power and greatness ; but the source of the evil (so he continues after this very equitable declaration), “ the source of the evil is not in the changes themselves, or in the views that led to them. It lay in the improvidence of other governments, careless of adapting their own situations to the new state of things produced by these events ; and in the shortightedness of statesmen, unmindful that an established federative system affords its members, if they know their own interest, ample means *to prevent every increase of power tending to destroy the harmony of their relations,*

*relations*, or to make every such aggrandizement contribute to the maintenance of those relations, without recourse to the violent measures of destructive and uncertain war."

A moment will be sufficient to convince us, that, if applied to the elevation of Prussia, this censure is utterly unfounded\*. There was only one power in Europe impelled by great and obvious interests to resist, in every possible manner, the aggrandizement of Prussia; and the history of the three Silesian wars will show whether that power beheld it with indifference. All other nations, without exception, were more or less interested in its favour; though some may at first have been averse to it. Every man sufficiently acquainted with the principles of political equilibrium to calculate its consequences, must surely have desired such a change. We have already seen what advantages resulted from it to *Germany*; and I have on more than one occasion pointed out wherein it has been favourable to *France*. Had not Prussia risen to her present greatness, the independence of the Empire must have been continually exposed to the dangers of

\* It must evidently be directed, principally, if not exclusively, to that event. For how the aggrandizement of Russia, a natural consequence of its civilization, or how the ascendant of England, the effect of her commerce and colonial possessions, could in any way have been prevented, is not very easily imagined.

internal usurpation or foreign cabal. The Emperor would have aimed at absolute dominion on the one hand ; or, on the other, the greater part of Germany would have been a scene of intestine division and confusion, or a prey to the fatal influence of a foreign power. This was sufficient to convince every enlightened statesman, whatever his personal inclinations, or particular principles, that the influence of Prussia was not only useful, but necessary. There had only been one opinion in Europe on this point for more than thirty years. It was reserved for our times to give additional confirmation, and even an unforeseen extent, to this opinion ; and to show that circumstances might exist in which the power of Prussia could be useful even to Austria ; could in some respects contribute even to her security and welfare. This, in the year 1789, would have been called a paradox : in the year 1802, it is a simple, evident, incontrovertible truth.

There appears, therefore, no sufficient reason to have induced the potentates of Europe to *prevent, in time*, the extension and consolidation of the power of Prussia. They would have acted very unreasonably, had they opposed a change so favourable to their general interests ; and the only thing they can properly be reproached with, is, their having too long refused



to acknowledge these interests ; too long and too obstinately combated the accession of a weight so happily adapted to the federal relations of the general system. It would be no less unjust to assert, that the formation of this new power was not " made to contribute to the maintenance of the due harmony between the former members of the federal constitution ;" for Prussia was as happily and wisely interwoven in the general interests, as any of its former component parts, and perhaps more so.

The aggrandizement of this kingdom has only in one respect been prejudicial to the tranquillity and security of the rest. It could not immediately acquire the extent and solidity necessary to ensure the permanence, and answer all the wants of its new position. Its territory, at the end of the seven years war, was not sufficiently extensive for the part it had to act ; its revenues were not adequate to the efforts required by its situation ; its provinces were so divided, as to increase the difficulty of defending its frontiers. This induced a necessity of extending its limits ; and *progressive aggrandizement* became in a certain degree the constant political maxim of Prussia, as the only means of maintaining her influence, and a rule of self-preservation. This restless activity frequently rendered her a subject of appre-

hension to her neighbours, until she had firmly established herself: and the plans thereby produced, even divested of all ambitious motives, were such as to render the Prussian system extremely inimical to the spirit of the law of nations. Hence the partition and subsequent annihilation of Poland. These events were occasioned no less (perhaps more) by the wants of Prussia than the ambition of Russia: wherefore we shall here examine more particularly their connexion with the general system, their character and effects.

I have already, in the preceding part of this work, expressed my opinion concerning the justice and propriety of that measure. This I once more repeat; and will here distinctly declare my sentiments of that and every similar political proceeding: these are, That the principles of the federal constitution ought to be as sacred in the general system of nations, as the laws in the interior of every state; that no political consideration, whatever its importance, or general utility, can excuse an action manifestly unjust; that justice ought to be the first and prevailing principle in all views of policy, in every possible conjuncture; that the violation of that principle, although it may occasionally and partially, or in its remote or accidental effects, be productive of good, is nevertheless always ruinous in the end; and that

no situation, no wants, no declared or secret motives, no future hope, no pretext of private or general interests, can justify such a violation.

This declaration will, I hope, sufficiently exempt me from the imputation of becoming the defender of proceedings, which, by disguising usurpation in the cloak of justice, by trampling under foot the most sacred principles, and by undermining the credit of all governments in the minds of all people, have brought so many misfortunes upon Europe. But while I thus condemn the *principle* of the Polish partition, I may be permitted to differ widely from those opinions of its *consequences*, that prevail among the political writers of the present day, especially with regard to its influence on the balance of power. After attentively considering the subject, I am persuaded the partition of Poland was very far from being prejudicial to that balance; which, in a certain point of view, it even contributed to preserve; and that it has rather been favourable, than adverse, to the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in Europe.

The following are the grounds of this opinion :

1st. The condition of Poland presented such a contrast to that of its three powerful neighbours,  
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as was highly unfavourable as well to the foreign relations, as to the domestic welfare of the former. Two of those powers had made very considerable progress in every branch of national wealth and civilization; and the third, though by no means so far advanced (in some respects even behind Poland), was at least evidently in a state of improvement. Poland, on the other hand, was restrained from any material advancement by a constitution which was a continual source of anarchy; which indeed was nothing more itself than constituted anarchy. And though the spirit of reform had been powerfully excited in this kingdom in the last ten years before its abolition, though it at length produced the plan of a more regular form of government, and had even proceeded to put it in execution; still it is evident the disproportion between its strength and that of the surrounding states would have continued; and considering the start those nations had got before it, the lapse of time would probably have served to increase, rather than diminish the difference. The necessary consequence of this disproportion was the continual dependence of Poland upon one of its neighbours; and the consequence of that dependance was the continuance of domestic faction, foreign cabal, and intestine dissensions. Such would have been the fate of that unhappy country, whatever the

nature of its new constitution. This focus of disorder, formed in an active, ingenious, ardent, and not unwarlike nation, must necessarily have kept the north of Europe in constant uneasiness and alarm, would have multiplied the plans and counter-plans of cabinets, and have made it absurd to reckon upon ten successive years of peace. This focus has vanished. The great mass of territory between the Oder and the Black Sea, the Carpathian Mountains and the Frozen Ocean, is now governed by three sovereigns, who have at least no constant principle of disorder, jealousy, and division between them ; who are at liberty to devote themselves, each according to his means and penetration, to the civilization and improvement of their respective countries ; and who need only subdue their own ambition, in order to live in peace and amity with each other. All this is indeed but a feeble and melancholy consolation for the deeply wounded spirit, the too just indignation and regret of a POLISH MAGNATE : but the judgment of every impartial politician will pronounce it a great and important advantage ; an advantage which all the north of Europe, and perhaps Poland itself, will in less than a century have felt and acknowledged.

2d. The partition of Poland has not destroyed the equilibrium between the powers concerned in  
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it ; their reciprocal relations have become by so much more stable and secure, as they have at least in one, and that a very important respect, been rendered more simple and permanent. The share allotted to each has been in due proportion to its former relative strength and extent of territory : in their common plan of aggrandizement, they provided against the preponderance of one over the others. With respect to the maintenance of peace among them, it appears to me rather a favourable circumstance than otherwise, that the points of contact are now so numerous between their respective territories. These were formerly divided by a country which none of them could consider a safeguard, because it was no where fortified, and not easily defended ; but which they all occasionally used as a magazine or a place of arms ; while, by making it the theatre of their military operations, they at once economized and multiplied their respective resources. The slightest misunderstanding now endangers the immediate interest of all the three states ; wherever the war breaks out, it must be carried on in their own country ; and the suffering party bears all the mischief and destruction that attends it. In this state of things, the desire of remaining at peace must surely be more serious and effectual than it was before.

The balance of power was not merely uninjured by the Polish partition ; that event even tended to strengthen and improve it. The equality of the partition was only apparent ; for the weaker parties were in fact much greater gainers by it than the stronger. This circumstance, the most important of all, deserves to be more attentively examined.

I argue from the two following principles ; if two or more nations of very unequal magnitude, are increased in an exact *numerical* proportion (that is, with respect to their territorial extent, their population, revenues, &c.), the *political* result will always be more advantageous than in that proportion to the smaller state ; and if two states, of which one has its territories sufficiently rounded, while the other yet wants that compactness, extend their territories in an equal degree, the advantage of the latter is without comparison more considerable than that of the former.

It will be easy to decide upon the consequences of the above partition, if these principles be admitted, and I think the truth of them is evident from the very nature of the things themselves. The advantage which Prussia derived from the measure, exceeded what accrued to the others. If Prussia, for example, acquired as many hundred square miles as Russia did thousands, the  
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real increase of strength resulting from these respective additions, was the most important for Prussia. Hitherto all the exertions of that state, the strength of its armies, the number of its fortresses, its magazines, its accumulated treasures, its preparations for defence, had either exceeded, or dangerously encroached upon the true basis of its power. That Russia was enabled by this acquisition to add 20 or 30,000 men to her armies, was of far less consequence to her, than it was to Prussia (without any considerable addition to her military establishment) to secure new sources of riches and revenue, and to give new strength to the overstrained springs of her bold and artificial machine. With respect to the rounding of her territories, she was perhaps a still greater gainer. Austria acquired no more by the province of Galicia than its intrinsic value : for Austria had long since been a compact and rounded state. But Prussia only became such by her share of the partition of Poland, which connected her provinces, till then divided and dispersed. The boundaries of her territory were now in one continued line, and the detached parts of her dominions were now blended into a solid mass, more capable of uniform activity and effectual resistance. If, while one state is merely increased, another is at once increased and improved in its situation, it certainly cannot be doubtful which of the two is the greater gainer\*.

\* Vide Note O.



These observations are decisive in the present argument : they reconcile Europe to the partition of Poland ; so far at least, as it is possible to acquiesce in an unjust proceeding. Prussia must be provided with strength to enable her to cope with any power in Europe, in order to establish an effective balance among the principal states, and to carry the general federative system to that degree of perfection at least, of which its elements, as they now exist, are capable. This is the real and general interest of Europe ; this is a principle of which no one any longer doubts, who considers it with candour and impartiality, and who understands the nature of the political balance, and federal constitution. Prussia was not so circumstanced until the partition of Poland. The genius and heroism of an extraordinary prince upheld it some time at a degree of elevation, which its strength at that period seemed inadequate to maintain : but in order to fulfil her entire destination, she required that degree of aggrandizement she has attained by the Polish partition. In this important point, that event has proved an additional support to the federal constitution, and a general advantage to Europe.

4th. If, then, the partition of Poland was in these respects conformable to the interests of Europe, we shall be able to judge definitively of  
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its effects, when we have decided, whether, while it confirmed the balance of power between the nations concerned, it did not injure the general equilibrium, or materially prejudice any of the other states.

The greater part of the states of Europe had only a distant interest in the partition of Poland ; to most of them it might have been indifferent ; and if any of them were particularly injured in less important respects, they were amply compensated by the great general advantage produced by the change. There were only two powers that could be immediately affected by it ; the OTTOMAN PORTE, and FRANCE.

The partition of Poland was prejudicial to the OTTOMAN EMPIRE, because it gave new strength to the two powers capable of hurting it, and which threatened it with ruin. No state in Europe, therefore, was so strongly urged by its interests to oppose that partition, as the government of Turkey. But the stupid indifference with which the Divan beheld proceedings so dangerous to its existence, was the strongest proof of a total want of policy, as well as strength, in this degraded empire ; showed that its vital principle was exhausted ; that it stood upon the verge of dissolution. No external combination could uphold a state, whose decline was the result of causes so  
deeply

deeply rooted. The partition of Poland may, perhaps, have accelerated its ruin ; but even supposing this to have been one of its consequences, it will still be a question which future experience can alone decide, whether it will in that respect have been a source of good or evil.

FRANCE, by this partition, was deprived of her former influence in Poland. In order to form a proper judgment of the magnitude of this loss, let us first examine, upon just principles, the true nature of that influence.

France, as we have already seen, enjoyed the highest degree of security in her situation, the strength of her frontiers, and her internal means of defence, that any nation could possibly attain. In this first and most important of all political considerations, she was not merely favoured above every other country : these advantages belonged exclusively to her ; there was nothing wanting to render them complete, nothing that she could wish for or desire. No power in Europe could look with the same indifference as France upon every change in the relative strengths of the rest. Her security could not be greater ; her independence could not be more complete. The partition of Poland produced no effect upon the French monarchy with respect to  
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these advantages ; and as to the additional stability accruing from the excellence of her federal relations, nobody will assert, or I am sure nobody will prove, that it experienced any diminution by that partition. The relations of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, and of France with all of them, remained upon the whole unaltered ; nay more, if in any respect they were changed, the alteration was in favour of France ; for the aggrandizement of Prussia, whatever its effects upon the politics of the moment, could not but be ultimately salutary and beneficial to her.

It is therefore evident that France could receive no real detriment from the partition in question. She lost her immediate influence in Poland, that is, the right, or the power of fomenting, and, perhaps, multiplying faction and cabal ; of adding to the causes or pretexts of commotion ; of perpetuating confusion and anarchy in that unfortunate kingdom \*. A loss of that nature was surely not prejudicial to the federal system of Europe : no upright and enlightened statesman would deplore such a loss, even though his own country were the loser.

\* Had France been able to introduce and maintain a good constitution in Poland, she ought undoubtedly to have spared no effort to accomplish it. But as things stood at that time, such an undertaking would have exceeded the powers even of a Lewis XIV.

5th. All these arguments will not only apply to the first partition of Poland, but likewise to the subsequent partitions, and final abolition of that kingdom \*. The events, however, are perfectly distinct : the abolition was by no means a necessary consequence of the treaty of 1772. Had Poland remained in the state it was placed in by that treaty, France would have been in every respect a gainer. She would then have united the advantages accruing to the general system of Europe from the partition of 1772, with the uninterrupted continuance of her influence in the remaining kingdom of Poland. That kingdom was still considerable, and might, notwithstanding its past misfortunes, have played an important part in the north of Europe, had its means been more profitably and judiciously applied. From the year 1788 the true method of accomplishing this had been actually adopted ; and it was only in the general confusion and disorder introduced by the French revolution into all political relations, that the independence of Poland could have been annihilated without opposition. All eyes were fixed on the bloody scenes created by the disturbances in France ; all attention was engrossed by the war which those disturbances had produced. The dissolution of Poland seemed only an unimportant episode, which did not even attract the regard, much less

\* Vide Note P.

awaken the activity, or call forth the effectual opposition of Europe in general.

The partition of Poland is one of the events on which the enemies of the former system of Europe dwell with peculiar pleasure; the favourite theme of the admirers of the French revolution; of all those, who more or less endeavour to justify the violent proceedings, the usurpations and subversions, of the last ten years. That no precedent or example of one act of injustice can justify or excuse the commission of another, and that successful violations of right can never establish the legitimacy of subsequent similar violations, is sufficiently obvious to those who regard principles as something more than mere forms of sophistry. But, alas! the immutable principles of justice prevail but little in the commerce of the world or the ordinary sphere of state policy. They are speedily silenced, when any great interest stands, or appears to stand, in opposition to them. Thus have those persons who maintain the necessity and utility of the late changes in the federative system, represented the partition of Poland as an event not only highly unjust, but extremely prejudicial; as having destroyed the balance of power, and at once prepared and justified the total subversion of the ancient political edifice. It appeared

peared to me of the greatest consequence to refute such arguments, and to show that the partition of Poland, however unjust in its principle, was not in its consequences so detrimental as has been represented; that it has rather tended to strengthen than undermine the political system; and has neither been an immediate nor collateral cause of new revolutions or usurpations. I shall have sufficiently fulfilled this intention, if the foregoing observations are not found destitute of foundation; and at the same time shall have combated and disarmed the severest censure upon the former political state of things in Europe; as far as it could be done without departing from a strict adherence to sacred principles.

#### RUSSIA.

The Russian empire, from the first moment of its elevation to a place among the principal states of Europe, possessed every foundation of power requisite and desirable for a nation of the first rank; such as many others had been unable to acquire by centuries even of successful efforts. Its immense extent, its remote situation, its great military resources, and the dread with which it inspired its neighbours, assured to it a degree of stability and security, of which no other state in Europe, except France, could boast. There

was none that so little required a continued influence in the relations and affairs of the rest; yet we should look in vain for a nation, whose territory is productive of materials, so numerous and valuable, by which to establish the most important connexions with all the nations of Europe; and, without any violent measures, to open a source of extensive, continual, and at the same time always peaceful influence.

The constant restlessness of this state, and the plans of conquest and aggrandizement which its rulers incessantly agitated, were partly owing to the natural, though not laudable, propensity of the human mind, to arrive by the shortest way at an object in view. They attempted to supersede the necessity of gradual and peaceful cultivation (the most certain and honourable method according to sound policy, though sometimes slow and troublesome), by hasty and violent measures. They originated likewise in the impatience and ambition of princes, who overlooked the treasures they possessed, and forgot their domestic concerns in the pursuit of distant objects. If the sovereigns of this immense empire had not only devoted a part of their attention and their means, as some of them have laudably done, but had directed their whole activity incessantly and exclusively to the cultivation of their fertile provinces,



vinces, and the civilization of their subjects; if they had made a proper use of their natural advantages; Russia would have been one of the most flourishing monarchies in the world, without any wars of aggrandizement; and the reigns of Peter I. and Catherine II. would have been the admiration of Europe in a much more exalted sense than they now are\*.

The addition made to this empire by Peter the Great, when he acquired the provinces on the Baltic, was more justifiable by the nature of his internal wants, and consequently more consistent with the principles of sound policy, than any of the Russian conquests in the eighteenth century. But the plans of his successors mostly originated in unbounded thirst of fame and dominion, or mistaken ideas of the true interests and strength of nations; and some of them were excited by cosmopolitical dreams of the splendour of past times. These plans deserved the opposition they met with, and would have justified a greater. As extravagant as they were arbitrary, they troubled the peace of Europe in the north and east; they excited wars, without even the slightest pretext of justice; and were wanton invasions of the balance of Europe absolutely unnecessary to the real interests of Russia. While the cabinet of Petersburg agitated projects of this na-

\* Vide Note Q.

ture, Russia was the constant object of the vigilance and anxiety, of the plans and counter-plans of all the neighbouring powers, and of every statesman in Europe.

These are truths that cannot be disputed. But have the numerous projects and restless activity of Russia, has the success that crowned some of her enterprises, materially affected the political system, or destroyed the balance of Europe? This is a question of a very different nature; and if the reverse of all this be fully established by an appeal to experience, the colossal power, the enormous ambition of Russia, will serve to demonstrate the strength, not the weakness, of the former federative system; will prove the wisdom of a constitution which all the efforts of a power so great, so unruly, and so ambitious of preponderance, were unable to overwhelm.

If we consider the condition of the Russian empire at the death of Catherine II. we shall find its effective strength by no means adequate to the extravagant ideas generally entertained by her cotemporaries. Its population, riches, and revenues, were not in proportion to its size, or to the extent and boldness of the projects of its government. Its armies were not much superior, even in numbers, to those which Austria,

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France,

France, or Prussia, could any of them send into the field ; and they were inferior in point of effective strength, if we consider the territorial magnitude of the Russian monarchy, and the distance of its central point from the principal theatres of war. Russia, notwithstanding her formidable appearance, was not more powerful than France or Austria, nor perhaps much more powerful than even Prussia : for we are to compare not merely the mass, but the nature of their respective forces, the facility of moving and applying them to different points, and the policy by which they were directed. There was always, therefore, more than one power sufficient by itself to counterbalance the weight of Russia ; and we are informed by history that the ambition of the court of Petersburgh has often been effectually checked even in its most favourite undertakings.

The first partition of Poland (for the others resulted from circumstances quite unconnected with any combinations of federal politics) appears to stand in contradiction to this assertion. Russia was then assisted in the execution of her plans by the two states whose separate and contrary interests afford the most effectual barrier to her undertakings, and on whom the northern and eastern powers rely for the maintenance of  
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their independence. But this transient union of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, was a singular phenomenon, produced by a conjunction of extraordinary circumstances, assisted by the genius of one of the greatest men of any age, and beyond the sphere of all the calculations of ordinary politics. Such phenomena must always defeat them ; they exceed the limits of the science, and expose its insufficiency. A similar combination will, perhaps, not occur in the course of many centuries ; it could never last ; its permanence would be in contradiction to the nature of things, and to the necessary order of all political relations. An intimate connexion between Russia and Austria, necessarily excites the jealousy of Prussia and her allies ; while such a connexion between Russia and Prussia must awaken that of Austria and the nations in alliance with her \*. Thus was a constant and necessary counterbalance opposed to every alliance between Russia and either of those powers ; and she has often felt, but never more remarkably than in her last war with Turkey, that this was sufficient to destroy the effects of all her dangerous projects.

The views of the Empress were on that occasion assisted by Austria. In opposition to every rule of sound policy, Joseph II. engaged in a war, which, even if crowned with the most

\* Vide Note R.

complete success, could never have contributed to his real interests. Whatever he could expect to gain by it, cannot, for a moment, be compared with the danger of throwing the greatest and most valuable part of the Ottoman empire into the hands of Russia. It is more than probable that the Emperor, in moments of calmer reflection, became sensible of his true situation; more than probable that he would have renounced the undertaking before the total annihilation of Turkey. He pursued it, however, with extraordinary zeal so long as the first enthusiasm was unabated; and it is not easy to pronounce what consequences these joint proceedings might have produced, if an alarm for the balance of Europe had not excited an opposition in another quarter, which speedily put an end to the danger of the Porte.

The history of this war has convinced all those who saw, in imagination, the giant strength of Russia redoubled by a second throne in Constantinople, that the system of Europe is not without resources even against the menacing preponderance of this formidable state. Not only Prussia prepared to oppose the designs of Russia, even England became the soul of an Anti-russian confederary; England, who might perhaps have beheld the aggrandizement of that empire with  
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less concern than any other power. All the hopes of the two most powerful and ambitious monarchs in Europe were instantly defeated. The King of Sweden, though not sufficiently supported, stepped forward, unexpectedly, an active and dangerous antagonist of Russia; he alarmed the Empress in the heart of her empire; he made her tremble for the safety of her capital, and proved that even states of the second order, when favoured by political combinations, may arrest or restrain the undertakings of the most powerful by timely diversions. On the other hand, the King of Prussia, after having separated Russia from her ally, by the treaty of Reichenbach, and thus destroyed the strength of the alliance, menaced the frontier of her empire with a numerous army. The treaty of Jassy completed the preservation of the Porte; and the city of Oczakow was the only conquest retained by Russia, the solitary fruit of all her bloody victories.

Thus did the federal constitution of Europe possess sufficient strength and stability to resist, effectually, the preponderance even of Russia, however irresistible it might appear; and Russia was compelled to move within the limits assigned to her by the principles of the political balance, notwithstanding the many advantages of her situation,

ation, her gigantic dimensions, her apparently inexhaustible strength, and the enterprising and ambitious characters of her sovereigns.

#### ENGLAND.

I am, at present, only examining the political state of Europe before the French revolution. It is, therefore, in her political relations alone, that England can here come under consideration. Her commercial constitution, with its influence upon the rest of Europe, will be the subject of a separate chapter. A subject so extensive and important requires a distinct and particular discussion ; it will be as much for the advantage of the reader, as it is the interest of the writer, to keep it entirely unmixed with every thing foreign to it.

I shall prepare the way for some observations on the political situation of England, by quoting the author of the *Etat de la France* : the following passage is the substance, the quintessence of the opinions of French politicians on this subject ; and the writer himself calls it “ *An historical Recapitulation of the Offences committed by ONE NATION, and of the Grievances of all THE REST.*”

“ We have seen how the English government,” such are the words of this remarkable passage,

passage, “ trusting to its situation (beyond the reach of all continental ambition), and relying on the resources derived from a subsidizing commerce, adapted its political conduct to the national views of commercial aggrandizement, extension, and usurpation; how it encouraged every principle of discord among the powers of the continent to divide and weaken them; how it every where assumed commercial preferences; how it formed engagements, of which the tenour and duration were determined by its own convenience; how it meddled in all political disputes to embitter them, and insinuated itself into all conventions to dissolve them; how it oppressed every country in Europe successively with the burden of its succours, incessantly making changes in the system of existing relations, producing false combinations of interest and power, and creating a partial ephemeral balance in opposition to the principles of the general equilibrium; in short, how it successively turned to account the weakness or the strength, the ambition or the prudence, the harmony or discord of all nations, great or small, by carefully inflaming the passions, and taking advantage of the wants, the dangers, and the alarms of the moment; profiting by the confusion of a multitude of interests, almost all at variance with each other, so as to establish, by its own perseverance and  
uniformity,



uniformity, a distinct interest, the sole object of all its views—that of its power rivalling every other power; that of its commercial system rivalling and excluding the commerce of every other country.”—The author assures us that this picture has been drawn without anger or malice. Of this he would perhaps find it difficult to convince even his own countrymen, at least the enlightened part of them. But whatever may have been his intentions or his feelings in this statement, it is our duty to proceed without anger or malice to examine it.

Whether the interests of Great Britain, her industry and commerce, are indeed so opposite to those of all other nations; and whether her government can find its real advantage, in the conduct of which it here stands accused; these are questions I cannot discuss until I enter at large upon the commercial relations of that country. The present subject of our consideration is, whether it has really so acted in the course of the eighteenth century? and whether that which the author denominates *An historical Recapitulation* of its offences, is supported and confirmed by the evidence of history?

This long string of accusations, when properly considered, is reduced to a single charge; the  
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stated crimes of the British government are nothing more than her offences against FRANCE. It is evident that England, from the remotest time, but more especially since the decay of Spain, has had but one perpetual enemy in the whole circle of Europe. It requires no argument to prove that the British government must desire to be at peace with all the world, except France \* ; that the weakest and most ignorant, the maddest administration (if such an one could ever be placed at the head of affairs in England), would never wantonly abandon so obvious a principle ; that to foment or engage in continental wars, could never be conducive even to the momentary interests of Great Britain ; that England possesses not the means of invading the powers of the continent, and can never become dangerous to the independence of other nations by projects of conquest or ambition ; and that, with respect to political relations, every idea of usurpation, dominion, or tyranny, on the part of the British government, must not only be unfounded, but in the highest degree absurd and ridiculous.

These indisputable truths are confirmed by the history of a whole century. All the wars in which England has been engaged, were either immediately and exclusively with France, or occasioned by events in which France was prin-

\* Vide Note S.

cipally concerned\*. France was always the object, and the only object, she had in view in all her alliances, her subsidies, her efforts by land and sea. This at length became the sole basis of British politics; so that the naval and military system of Great Britain was established with reference to France exclusively, and directed entirely against her. This observation justifies, in the first place, the caution with which every reasonable and impartial person in Europe ought to receive accusations against England, from the pen of a French writer†: it weakens, besides, inasmuch as it simplifies, the mass of what is called the offences of ONE NATION, and the grievances of ALL THE REST. With respect to political relations, England can never have sinned against all other nations, but by injuries done to France. The question between England and Europe is, in every possible case, reduced to a question between England and France; and the resentment, hatred, and opposition of Europe can never be awakened by the conduct of England, except where the interests of France and those of Europe are the same.

\* Vide Note T.

† On the other hand, the passionate declamations of an English writer against France are to be received with the same caution. There are some honourable exceptions on either side. But I leave to any man acquainted with the political writings of both countries, to determine conscientiously, in which these exceptions are most rare.

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The following clear and simple principle will therefore guide an impartial and enlightened public in its judgment on the conduct of England in every war in which it has been, or may hereafter be engaged.

1st, In every war between France and England, of which their respective interests are the only motives, Europe may remain an unconcerned spectator, without interfering in their several rights and pretensions.

2dly, In every dispute or war in which the conduct of France endangers the security and independence of other nations, the opposition of England is consistent with the interests of Europe.

3dly, In every war or dispute in which France is in danger of being oppressed, dismembered, or deprived of her just and salutary influence, the co-operation of England is at variance with the interests of Europe.

Before we apply these principles to the wars which took place between France and England, before the revolution, it will be necessary to premise a few general observations on the respective situations of those two nations.

Which

Which of these two is most likely to endanger the balance of power, and to threaten the independence of Europe? This question might be answered in the shortest and most decisive manner, by the testimony and authority of French writers themselves, if I were to employ, for that purpose, the arguments and declamations by which they have, during the last fifty years, been endeavouring to prove, that the internal national strength of Great Britain cannot be compared with the foundations of the power and greatness of France. According to their assertions, "the whole power of England is a precarious fabric, upon a deceitful foundation, which the first severe shock may convert into a heap of ruins. The riches of England are not real, solid, and lasting, but imaginary; artificial, and transient; depending upon circumstances of the moment, and to vanish as speedily as they arose, whenever a change shall happen in those circumstances: the influence of the British government in Europe is as unnatural, and not less unstable than the basis of its power; and will sink, together with that power, into nothing, whenever Europe shall understand its true interests." On the other hand, according to these politicians, "the power of FRANCE has a great and unalterable foundation; she derives inexhaustible resources from a fruitful and extensive territory; her real and solid riches are

of a nature very different from the precarious supplies of England's commercial industry ; to the momentary illusions operated by the gold of her rival, France opposes the necessary, durable, unalterable influence of a nation endowed with endless resources ; and whose geographical, military, and political advantages render it at once secure and powerful."

It would be easy to draw such conclusions from these assertions as would at once answer and put an end to every idea of a dangerous preponderance on the part of Great Britain. But this, with the opinions I hold, would be a mere artifice, a lawyer's quibble, such as I would not even use if the present work were written with no other object than the defence and justification of the British government. But the case is not as those writers have described it. The power, the riches, and the political influence of England, are as well founded and as real as those of France : England's greatness rests upon a basis as firm as that of her rival ; their resources and their means may be different, but the result is the same in both.

It is nevertheless true, that France is superior to England in power and influence, if we merely compare the natural and political relations, the geographical situation, the offensive  
and

and defensive resources, the capability of external efforts, of the two nations, without regard to the effects produced by the good or bad use of such advantages. Whenever the balance of power is destroyed, it is more probable that England will suffer by the change, than deserve to be accused as the cause of it.

In support of this opinion the following arguments appear to me incontrovertible :

1st, England is a maritime power only : her operations on the continent are seldom of importance, and have never had any lasting effects ; whereas France is at once a maritime and military nation. By a proper application of her strength, France may effectually resist the preponderance of the British navy : this has more than once been the case already, and is equally likely to happen again. When, and as often as it does happen, the advantage is not only decidedly on the part of France, but her superiority is immense.

2dly, The only points of contact between England and the other European powers, are her federal, mercantile, and pecuniary relations ; her military operations can effect them very little, if at all. Plans of conquest and  
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aggrandizement are beyond her reach ; her armies can at the most only serve for occasional expeditions, but never, any more than her fleets, become the instruments of any permanent continental dominion. France, besides the federal, commercial, and pecuniary relations which she possesses in common with England, has extensive military resources always ready to execute any great continental undertaking. She can threaten and promise, can act and negotiate : her limits are not, like those of England, unalterably fixed ; they are capable of being continually extended ; they have been so for centuries back ; and if, before the revolution, they had reached the point which ought to have satisfied a wise and peaceful policy, the events of later times have shown, that moderation and wisdom are not allied with ambition.

3dly, France is, and has long been, completely protected against every foreign attack ; nor is the subjugation or destruction of her monarchy among the conceivable consequences of any such attempt. England has not this invaluable security to boast of ; she has, more than once, been threatened with actual invasion ; and, what is worse, if such invasion were attended with success, the consequences would be, beyond all calculation, destructive.



The practicability of a descent in England, has been the subject of much dispute. I shall not enter here into the merits of that question. Certain it is, that the undertaking would be attended with very great difficulty and risk; that the resistance in the interior of the country would be extremely vigorous; and perhaps, since the late organization of the militia, quite insurmountable. But it is no less certain, that, in the opinions of the best judges, the invasion of England is by no means impossible; she has been frequently threatened with it, and has more than once been made to tremble with alarm\*. Such an attempt has always been among the plans of the French ministry, who considered it far from chimerical†. The situation of a state exposed to the bare possibility, the remotest chance of such a fatal enterprise in the course of its wars, must necessarily be somewhat more precarious, under circumstances otherwise equal, than that of a nation entirely free from every such apprehension.

4thly, An uninterrupted intercourse with all parts of Europe is important and desirable for every commercial state. By the pro-

\* We find a remarkable instance of this in the year 1756, when the nation was seized with such a panic, that the threatened descent of the French occasioned the loss of Minorca.

† Vide Note U.

duce of her industry, and the policy of her government, England can often exclude other nations, and especially France, from many of the markets of Europe; but could never effect this by open force. France has been, and is still, able to exclude all other commercial powers, and consequently England, from some of the most valuable provinces on the continent, by the superiority of her arms\*. The political basis of commerce was therefore less favourable to England than to France: and England found herself, in every continental war, exposed to danger on a side which affected her very existence; a danger unknown to her adversary.]

Having premised these observations, I shall now briefly review the wars between France and England, since the treaty of Westphalia, in order to determine, by historic testimony, which of the two has in general supported the cause in which the interests of Europe have been embarked.

We have more than once made mention of the wars of Lewis XIV. There can scarcely remain a doubt with respect to the conduct of the nations engaged in them. The life of Wil-

\* One of the chief motives of England in every continental war, has always been the danger of seeing the Netherlands in the hands of France, and thus lost to her commerce. France had never any apprehensions of the same nature.

liam III. was one continued struggle for the maintenance of the balance of power. The war for the Spanish succession was the last act of that glorious drama. It is evident (and even the French writers are unanimous in confessing it), that the equity and moderation of the British cabinet alone, preserved France from much greater humiliation than she actually suffered at the conclusion of that contest : any person, though only superficially instructed in the history of that period, must be acquainted with the attempts of Austria and Holland to obstruct the negotiations ; and will admit the indisputable truth, that the treaty of Utrecht was owing to the exertions and good offices of England alone.

From the treaty of Utrecht till the Austrian succession war, for a period of more than thirty years, England and France remained in a state of uninterrupted peace. During a considerable part of that time, the two rival powers were even connected by alliance ; and whatever may be the opinions of enlightened English statesmen, with respect to the wisdom and utility of such alliances, it is certain that France enjoyed the benefit of them. England, indeed, renewed her former connexion with Austria by the treaty of Vienna in 1731 ; but so little did that affect the interests of France, that in the year 1735 she commenced and prosecuted, without inter-

ruption,

ruption, one of the most successful wars she ever waged against Austria; and by the treaty of 1738, secured the important acquisition of Lorraine, not only without the opposition, but even by the mediation of England. The great aversion to war that characterized the twenty years administration of Sir Robert Walpole, was taken advantage of by France more successfully than she could have desired or expected.

The part acted by England in the war for the Austrian succession, was not only justified by her own immediate interests, but by the general and manifest want of a power to counteract the projects of France, and the necessity of effectually supporting the sinking monarchy of Austria \*. The plans which France had formed for weakening her continental rival for ever, are well known; and let every impartial judge determine whether Europe would have cause to rejoice at the success of such plans. The assistance which Austria, in that critical moment, received from England, accorded with the true principles of federal policy, and the interests of all Europe. This truth was fully confirmed by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle. It was a very remarkable circumstance, that England, at that time, renounced advantages belonging exclusively to

\* Vide Note V.

her, and more or less indifferent to the rest of Europe, for the purpose of depriving France of advantages which only affected the interests of Great Britain, in common with those of all the European powers. Great Britain renounced her conquests in America, and gave back the important acquisition of Cape Breton, to compel France to quit the Austrian Netherlands. The whole benefit which she derived from this war, was the restoration, as far as possible, of the *status quo* in Europe.

The war which desolated almost every part of the world from the year 1755 to 1763, originated in two perfectly distinct causes : the one, the difference between France and England concerning their limits in North America ; the other, the coalition of the leading powers of the continent against the King of Prussia. I will not take upon me to determine whether France or England was the aggressor in this long and bloody war\*. I am taking a general view of political events and their consequences, altogether distinct from the merits or demerits of particular actions or individuals, and considering their influence on the general system—the federal interests of Europe.

In this point of view we must allow, that, in the seven years war, the projects of France were

\* Vide Note W.

as incompatible with the interests, and even the security of Europe, as the conduct of England was consistent with the true principles of the federal constitution. In the war for the Austrian succession, England had supported the Austrian monarchy against France and Prussia ; she now protected Prussia against France and Austria. Under the different circumstances of either period, her conduct was equally wise and salutary in both. The maintenance of Prussia was not less connected with the interests of Europe, than the preservation of Austria. The part which England played in the seven years war, fully established her right to the title of preserver and defender of the federal system ; which she supported against every attempt to violate or disturb it, whatever pretext or authority invaded it.

This war was indeed productive of events of another kind. The power of France in North America was nearly annihilated ; her navy was reduced almost to nothing ; and England remained a considerable time undisputed mistress of the seas. But all these consequences (to be ascribed, moreover, to the errors of France herself) were not immediately connected with the interests of Europe ; they did not counterbalance the beneficial effects of the interference of England in the seven years war, and the advantage derived therefrom to the relations of the continental states ;

they rather affected France in her individual, than federal capacity ; affected her merely as the rival of Great Britain, not as a component part of the general political system. It is not surprising that France should esteem this war the most unfortunate she ever waged ; and that its result should have increased in the highest degree the jealousy, hatred, and enmity, which have at all times inflamed the two nations. The peace of 1762 is alone the great and never-to-be-forgotten crime unpardonable in the eyes of every French politician, the first cause of all the declamations against the insolence and tyranny of England, the object of everlasting and implacable revenge. Endless complaints followed the peace of 1762, and, notwithstanding all the victories since obtained by France, have continued to be repeated to the present day. These are the lamentations of those who were weakened and humbled by that event \*. But what has the rest of Europe to do with them ? Was France deprived of her rank and influence in the general federative system ? Was her security, was her territory invaded ? Did she lose any of her internal or external means of defence ? Did she even cease to be a maritime power, to possess a navy, commerce, or colonies ? Did England prescribe laws to Europe upon the ruins of her rival ?

\* Vide Note X.

Did she disturb, or even threaten, the balance of power ? Nothing of all this. At the conclusion of the seven years war, the political equilibrium was as complete, nay more so than it ever had been ; and France continued what she always was, one of the first powers on the continent. That she had even not ceased to be one of the first maritime states, was sufficiently evinced at the commencement of the following war with England.

This war, the last before the revolution, raised the French navy almost to an equality with that of England, crowned it with several brilliant victories, and wrested from Great Britain the sovereignty of the most valuable colonies in the world. Never, indeed, was the little narrow policy, whose shortfighted wisdom fancies its own riches in the poverty of others, and builds its own greatness upon the weakness of its neighbours ; never was the mean policy which had so long governed and misled the princes of Europe, more severely mortified than by the final result of the American war. It was intended to ruin England for ever, and it prepared the period of her solid, unalterable, and independent greatness. It was to have erected a new edifice of French dominion upon the ruins of Great Britain : it produced nothing more to France than a desolating revolution.



tion. But whatever the remote and unforeseen consequences of that war, its immediate effects did not disappoint the hopes of its authors. According to the common, that is, the prevailing ideas of commercial and political advantage, France obtained as much as could possibly be gained by such a war : she was also a gainer in some more essential respects ; her navy was organized anew ; her fleets were made to rival those of England ; the honour of her flag was re-established in every quarter of the globe. The peace of 1783 made her great amends, if not complete compensation, for the injury occasioned by that of 1762.

If we compare this historical survey with the above-stated fundamental principles, we shall find,

1st, That most of the wars in which England and France have been engaged since the beginning of the eighteenth century, have not been immediately connected with the interests of the federal system ; but that their objects have been either entirely (as in 1778), or partly (as in 1756), within the sphere of the peculiar relations of the two states, the extension or limitation of their commercial and colonial systems.

2dly,

2dly, That in several of those wars (in the Spanish and Austrian successions, and seven years wars, for example) the balance of Europe was more or less threatened by France, was maintained and defended by England.

3dly, That there existed in none of them any danger of the due influence of France being destroyed, or essentially diminished, so as to injure the general federative system ; or of England's acquiring an undue preponderance in that system.

What now becomes of all those accusations with which the spirit of faction has armed itself, to decry the politics of England as a labyrinth of intrigue and cabal ; of premeditated versatility, and systematic inconstancy ? Where then are the “ wars that England has excited ?” Where are the connexions into which she has entered merely “ to dissolve them ?” Where are the “ false combinations” she has created ? the “ subordinate, transient alliances formed by her, in contradiction to the principles of the general system of equilibrium ?” The history of the eighteenth century mentions none of these ! The same views have uniformly directed the conduct of the British government ; a vigilant and active opposition to the enterprising ambition of France, has been its constant

stant object. The manner of pursuing it has been different, according as circumstances have changed. When France was in alliance with Prussia, England took the part of Austria; when France and Austria were united, she declared in favour of Prussia. The federal relations of England were always the antitype, and, as it were, the echo of those of France; the political motives of the one were always regulated and influenced by the conduct of the other. In all the great wars of this century, the constant plan and endeavour of France was to effect a revolution in the federal system: in the war of the Spanish succession, to aggrandize the House of Bourbon; in the contest for the Austrian succession, to destroy all the proportions of power in Germany; in the seven years war, to annihilate the King of Prussia. In each of these wars, it was the constant plan and endeavour of England, to prevent any such revolution, to uphold existing relations, and to throw her weight into the scale from which France had withdrawn her own. It is quite indifferent to the present question, whether this proceeded from a generous zeal for the common welfare of Europe, or motives of self-interest, or hatred and jealousy of France. The effect was in either way the same; and if it could be a reproach to England to have been guided by the motives which have always regulated

lated the political conduct of every nation in the world ; if she really can be convicted of the sin of having “ prosecuted, with uniform perseverance, the interests, always predominant, of her power ;” yet is it nevertheless certain, that, on account of the particular political relations of England, these her private interests were at the same time the common interests of Europe : the preservation, the security, and the equilibrium of the whole federal constitution.

There is one point in the act of accusation against England, which, though it naturally falls to the ground, when the whole is deprived of its foundation, yet requires a more particular examination, because it is the most frequently repeated, and most strongly urged. It is what relates to subsidies : “ England has oppressed all the nations of Europe successively with the *burden* of her succours.” This strange expression is either entirely without meaning, or its meaning is, that England has incited, or (to use a word appropriate to the “ burden of these succours”) has forced the nations of Europe to engage unwillingly in wars contrary to their interests and their wishes.

In the great mass of idle, common-place declamations, which, in a superficial and credulous  
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age, are handed from one writer to another, and (alas ! we must add) from one generation to another, there are some so remarkably contemptible, as to render criticism almost ashamed to make them the objects of any serious examination. Of this nature is the whole of this miserable stuff about the effect of subsidies in creating and protracting wars. That a little insignificant prince, incapable himself of waging war, obliged to regulate his measures by the conduct of the leading powers, and to shape his motions according to theirs ; possessing no sources of revenue, and yet avaricious of money ; maintaining just so many troops as the security of his person, or a pitiful vanity, requires ; that such a prince should sell the strength of his country for ready money, and take part in proceedings, indifferent or contrary to his real interests, for paltry gold—is conceivable, is possible, is not without example. But that any of the principal powers should engage in war merely for the sake of foreign subsidies, must for ever remain incredible to every man, who can form an idea of the burdens of war for such a power, and who is acquainted with the general outline only of the enormous expenses of a single campaign : I mean the expenses in the strictest sense of the word, the pecuniary charges, altogether independent of the numberless sacrifices and dangers which outweigh  
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all the money in the world. I speak entirely within bounds, when I say that no subsidy ever sufficed to defray one half of the charges to be encountered by a great nation in the prosecution of a war. No subsidies could ever be the principal cause of the commencement or prolongation of a state of warfare. Never was there any government so depraved, never policy so weak and shortsighted, as to err so extravagantly, so madly, in its calculations. However contemptible some people may choose to hold the principles and judgments of princes and their counsellors, they must not impute measures to them, so obviously contrary to their immediate interests, even those of the moment.

The only case in which one power can offer subsidies to another with any prospect of advantage, is when the mutual interests of the two nations are immediately connected in some great and pre-existing object. Such has been the history of every treaty of subsidy in the eighteenth century. A common interest, a common purpose, was the motive ; the connexion was formed by the mutual wants of the contracting parties. Subsidies did not create the plan, but facilitated the execution of it. Men and money are required for making war. Nothing is more natural than that the state possessing an abundance of  
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men should supply its ally with troops ; and that money should be advanced by the power which has great pecuniary means. These reciprocal succours are the result of a well-concerted, and at the same time just and honourable policy. These are the fruits of a good federal constitution ; for every thing that contributes to the maintenance of the equilibrium, and increases and improves the means of resisting every project of invading it, must be productive of great and manifest advantage to the whole,

These complaints against the prejudicial effects of England's subsidies, must therefore stand or fall with the rest of the accusations preferred against her. If the part which England acted in the general political system was condemnable, and her interference in the affairs of the continent prejudicial ; if she overturned the balance of Europe, or alarmed, oppressed, and enslaved her neighbours ; then were her subsidies the misfortune and the curse of Europe. But if her conduct was the reverse of all this ; if she supported the oppressed and persecuted against the ambition of the powerful ; if her efforts were in conformity with the true interests of the continent, the independence and security of all nations, and were of a nature to preserve and defend

send the balance of Europe ; then were the subsidies she afforded an advantage, not only for those who received, but even for those who did not immediately partake of them : and they alone will give the name of burdens to these succours, whose inordinate power has been checked and humbled by the influence of Great Britain.

I am far from having written this chapter with the view of defending the policy and administration of Great Britain, from the time of William III. until the year 1789 ; should any one suspect me of that, let him be candid enough to consider attentively the nature of my subject. While I combat the assertions of a writer, who, like all French politicians, pays little regard to the principles of equity, and frequently forgets his own when he speaks of England, the simplest statement of the truth must necessarily sometimes take the form and character of an apology. My only object was, to describe the true state and political relations of Europe before the commencement of the French revolution. For this purpose it was absolutely necessary to make that country the principal subject of my consideration, which, according to the assertions of French writers, has been the source of all the wars, convulsions, and misfortunes that have desolated Europe. By a complete analysis of these severe and arbitrary charges,



charges, supported by the incontrovertible evidence of history, I have proved that, at the beginning of the revolution, England was precisely so placed as her own safety and the security of Europe required; that her political influence could not be dangerous to any nation, not even to France, her constant and only enemy; that neither desirous nor able to disturb the equilibrium of the general system, she was, on the contrary, the shield and bulwark of that system in all the most important transactions of the eighteenth century.

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Let me be permitted, at the close of this chapter, once more to state the object of all the preceding observations.

I ventured to assert, that we ought, upon the whole, to be satisfied with the federal constitution, though defective in several important respects, “if between the principal states composing that constitution there existed a due balance of power; if their stability were secured, their progress and improvement unrestrained; if, in the system of their action and reaction, the independence of the smaller states were protected (so much at least, as, in a community with the strong,

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the weak can be effectually protected); and if there were no such preponderance on any side, as to threaten the liberties of the neighbouring states, or endanger the peace of the whole." If the preceding survey of the several relations of the leading powers be fundamentally accurate, it will not be difficult to form a satisfactory opinion of that federative system which the French revolution found and destroyed. Let any impartial observer compare it with what has before been said of the internal constitution of each nation, and then decide, whether, "before the French revolution, all the governments of Europe were in a position false and unnatural with regard to each other, oppressive and ruinous with respect to their subjects."

The federal system of Europe, and the law of nations, were yet capable of much improvement; left many reasonable desires, many just demands, unsatisfied. There was more than one important point relating both to peace and war, which had never been sufficiently discussed, and remained to be regulated by general convention. The irregular distribution of the territories of several powerful empires; the uncertainty of their limits, the remote situation of their provinces (often entirely surrounded by those of other powers); the great number of small defenceless states, whose very in-

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dependence

dependence was sometimes a burden to them ; the numerous and various pretensions of the different sovereigns ; and the want, so often felt, of a more comprehensive code of public law : all these were evils of which no enlightened European could remain insensible. Perpetual peace, the ever cherished, ever disappointed hope of mankind, seemed still beyond the reach of political wisdom ; the world continued to be vexed with disputes concerning the limits, the right of succession, the privileges of commerce and navigation of the several powers, and still oftener by the ambition of princes, and the unruly passions of their subjects.

But all these defects would never have induced an impartial judge to condemn the whole edifice as ruinous and unserviceable. We might have expected from time, and the improved condition of society, the remedies for these evils ; our consolatory hopes of the future were founded upon the successful efforts of the past. It became more and more manifest during the last twenty years before the revolution, that the principles of government, and the law of nations, were advancing towards perfection ; and that a period of peace, concord, and universal amelioration, was fast approaching.

The following were the obvious symptoms of this approaching change ;

1st. The governments of Europe were at length sufficiently convinced, that the internal cultivation of their respective states was a source of riches, power, influence, real glory, and even external splendour, far more productive than all the conquests and aggrandizements that war or negotiation can accomplish. This was indeed no new-discovered truth ; all ages have produced wise men who have preached it to the ears of princes, or handed it down in their immortal writings to succeeding generations. But it was a new circumstance, and peculiar to our times, that this blessed doctrine no longer remained a dead letter ; that it pervaded the sphere of practical life ; penetrated into the cabinets of ministers, and mixed with the maxims of state. It may be said that princes did not conform to it in their actions ; but it was surely a great and important advantage, that they fully acknowledged the truth of it ; that they openly and solemnly renounced the barbarous principles of former times ; that they regarded war, not merely (like their fathers) as a breach of God's commandment, but as a pernicious folly, a mistaken policy, injurious and destructive in itself ; that they condemned it as a positive evil, and that their understanding was

convinced, although their passions were yet un-  
 subdued. Mankind had the greatest reason to ex-  
 ult when they perceived the true principles of  
 commercial policy prevailing over all obstacles,  
 and combating successfully the most deep-rooted  
 prejudices. Men recovered from the rage for  
 monopoly, as from a dream of the infancy of hu-  
 man industry ; their former ideas of the import-  
 ance of exclusive dominion in distant regions,  
 were considerably diminished, and the value of  
 colonial possessions began to be seen in its true  
 point of view. The same rivalry indeed conti-  
 nued in full force between the commercial na-  
 tions ; but it existed in a more reasonable man-  
 ner, and was no longer excited by vain phan-  
 toms, but contended for solid advantages. This  
 evidently led the way to peace among nations ;  
 mankind had already passed judgment upon wars  
 of conquest : the moment was not far distant when  
 they would have unanimously acknowledged the  
 folly of commercial wars.

2d. A more enlightened, liberal, and benivo-  
 lent way of thinking, had at the same time spread  
 through the great body of the people in almost  
 every European country. Their eyes were opened  
 to their true interests ; not only this or that par-  
 ticular war, but all wars were become in the  
 highest degree unpopular \*. The different rela-

\* Vide Note Y.

tions of nations to each other, their respective rights and obligations, the extent and condition of their connexions, were every where more clearly seen and better understood. The study of the law of nations had advanced with every other branch of knowledge. Men were more generally agreed upon what was just and lawful, though they did not always practise it. In vain would the governments of Europe have attempted to counteract the spirit of the age; it was too powerful for them to control; and they were besides invited by their own interest to favour it. Never was the force of public opinion so great; never was the violation of justice so loudly, so energetically, and so universally condemned, by the disapprobation and abhorrence of mankind; and whatever might be the case with respect to the purity of their intentions, or the internal morality of their actions, the principles publicly acknowledged, honoured, and professed by men in general, had never been more excellent and praiseworthy.

To select this very hopeful period for the object of the bitterest accusations; to represent it as utterly destitute of every true principle of government, every vestige of the law of nations; appears to me one of the boldest undertakings a political writer could ever have conceived. The

eloquence and logic of all ancient and modern sophists combined, would be unequal to the task. All books, all treaties, the memories of all men living, must be annihilated before the sanction of incorruptible history could be procured to such a statement. No ! she will hand a very different account, a directly contrary one, down to posterity ! Europe not only possessed, before the French revolution, all the elements of a law of nations, and the essential groundwork of a social constitution ; an efficient guaranty of the political relations of states, a well-organized federal system, and a beneficial balance of power : but the spirit with which these elements should be animated ; an universal reverence of law and justice ; an earnest desire to exclude all violence, oppression, and war ; a visible and sensible tendency to cultivate the ties of federal union, and to establish peace and harmony among all nations : these likewise had been awakened among us. A single glance at the state of Europe at the conclusion of the treaty of Westphalia, and in the year 1786, presents such a contrast as must at once annihilate a world of unfounded and calumnious declamation.

If, in the year 1786, the question had been put to any candid statesman (for reason has  
nothing

nothing to do with the demands of extravagant enthusiasm); if any reasonable and enlightened citizen of the world, neither blind nor indifferent to the actual defects of the federal system, had been asked, "whether it were advisable to improve the social constitution by a general and sudden dissolution of all existing relations?" it is probable that his only answer would have been a smile of contempt, or an exclamation of horror! This dissolution has actually taken place; and lamentations are now in vain. Nothing more remains for political wisdom than to search among the ruins of the former edifice, the materials for a new one. But in order that the mischief may not be irreparable, we must banish the fatal opinion, that it was unavoidable; and the still more fatal one, that it was useful and beneficial. The disease is too manifest to be denied; but a false idea of its origin, conceived by mistaken, and encouraged by crafty empirics, has diffused the specious persuasion that it was a salutary crisis, a necessary step to improvement. Till this delusion be dissipated, there are no hopes of amendment.



## P A R T II.

*Of the Situation of Europe after the French Revolution.*

FALSE premises lead to false conclusions. The author of the *Etat de la France* having described Europe, before the revolution, as a scene of universal anarchy and ruin, it was natural to expect he would erect a superstructure of the same kind on that foundation, which is not merely exaggerated, but altogether arbitrary, and in defiance of history and experience: this was a matter of course. But however prepared we might be for strange, unusual, and paradoxical conclusions, our Author has far exceeded the most extravagant expectations.

If it should happen that nothing more remained for the reader of some future time, than his dark picture of the former political system of Europe; if, from the principal features, the tone and spirit of that fragment, it were required to guess the remainder of his work; I can hardly conceive that any future commentator would be found possessed of sufficient penetration and assurance to restore the latter part in its  
true

true shape. The most rational conjecture would, perhaps, suppose the following reasoning: "The revolution found Europe weakened and distracted on all sides; deprived of every guaranty of a due equilibrium, every pillar of its federal constitution, every maxim of state administration, and every principle of the law of nations. It kindled a dreadful war; and the convulsions that ensued, subverted the few pillars of the social constitution that yet supported the tottering edifice. Destruction advanced with giant strides; the whole building crumbled into atoms, and Europe became a theatre of ruin and desolation. But however melancholy the fate of the unhappy generation that survived this catastrophe, however pitiable their situation, however critical and hopeless the prospect of their regeneration, they had no right to complain of their lot; they had no real cause to lament it. No right, for their misfortune was their fault; they might have foreseen the approaching evil; they deserved it by their criminal indifference to the obvious indications of an approaching storm, by their guilty inactivity in the midst of the daily more visible decay of their whole social system, of their civil, political, and federal relations. They had no reason to lament it; for what they lost was in reality not worth regretting. Their existence had long been divested of every thing

that could contribute to its dignity, safety, and consistency; the anarchy was complete, however veiled by custom, indolence, and the daily palliatives of a contemptible commonplace policy. The explosion was not to be avoided; the revolution, and the war it produced, were only the last and decisive efforts of the evil; and whatever a suffering world may have endured under the joint scourges of these two dreadful plagues, yet it may, and it ought sincerely to rejoice, that the crisis is at length surmounted, and the period arrived, when, rising from the ruins of the past, it may erect a new edifice with more solid materials, more deliberate wisdom, and more accurate principles; and hand down to a grateful posterity the blessings of a more perfect constitution."

This reasoning, all built upon the assumption of the total inefficacy of our former political and civil organization, will of course have no weight where the premises are not admitted: and I think I have fully proved, in a preceding chapter, that such positions will not bear strict examination. The writer, however, would have been justified in proceeding upon these grounds to the consequences above stated. Had he been satisfied with that, he would at least have avoided the reproach of doing violence to his own premises,

of abusing his principles by unwarranted conclusions, and of having, by a singular refinement of sophistry, deduced an arbitrary and false result from a false and arbitrary hypothesis.

The Author was not satisfied with painting the revolution as a necessary consequence of the previous disorder of Europe, and the war of the revolution, with all its new disorders, as its natural companion. Such a gradation was not bold and striking enough for him : he passed over the revolution, and deduced the general war between France and the powers of Europe, *immediately* from the faultiness of the former federal constitution, the annihilation of all political principle, the dissolution of the law of nations, and the blindness and folly of all governments.

I should exhaust the patience of the reader were I to recapitulate the string of accusations, by which, in the first chapters of his work, he supports this singular deduction, and in which he vents his spleen under various colours and pretences, and sometimes in the most violent terms. It will suffice at present to bring forward a single passage, which, though one of the most moderate, will throw much light upon the general train of his ideas. On a nearer examination of this system, we shall have more than one opportunity

opportunity of following him in the rest of his observations.

“ The war of the revolution,” such are the words of this passage, “ was the last scene of a hundred and fifty years of improvidence, blindness, and impolicy. After having first dreaded the ascendancy of France without cause, or from exaggerated motives, and afterwards long disdained her beneficial influence, the powers of Europe became accustomed to dispense with her tutelary preponderance, and made a sport of her political degradation during thirty years ; and when at length some unexpected circumstances enabled a nation, whose ambitious politics were never effectually checked but by France, to debate in the most public manner, whether she ought not to be extirpated—all Europe took arms, and formed a confederacy as wicked as it was senseless ! from which moment every vestige of the law of nations was abolished.”—Thus arose, according to the Author’s ideas, a war, whose dreadful consequences have shaken the federal system to its foundations ; have rendered the present state of Europe an enigma ; made its future existence problematical ; and destroyed more within the short space of ten years, than many centuries had raised, or perhaps than ages will be able to restore. This war was a wanton attempt,

attempt, by the most unnatural of all alliances, to build a new political system, and establish a new division of power upon the ruins of the French monarchy ; and thus to restore the long-lost balance of Europe, by for ever annihilating the first and most important of its elements !

If the events of this war were utterly effaced from the memories of all who witnessed them ; if history were suddenly to stop, and the space between 1789 and 1801 to remain a frightful blank for posterity ; still this representation, or rather misrepresentation, of its origin, must for ever be incredible while a vestige yet remains of the former system of Europe. Such could not possibly be the causes of that war ! would the latest posterity exclaim ; and shall we who have seen and survived it, be imposed upon by fables, which have not even the merit of being ingeniously fabricated ?

There certainly was a time when the most dangerous attempts were apprehended, not “ without sufficient cause,” from the ambitious politics of France ; against whom a general league would then have been a very probable, and at the same time justifiable and even necessary measure. It would even then have been a violation of sense and justice to project the total degradation

gradation of France, instead of defining her proper limits; or to look for the security of Europe in the dismemberment, conquest, or annihilation of that nation. In a period, however, of such general discontent, the extravagant fears of one prince, or restless ambition of another, or secret enmity under colour of the public safety, might have conceived or favoured so absurd a plan; which under those circumstances would not be quite unaccountable, though neither laudable nor wise. But what inducement, immediate or remote, could incite the powers of Europe to overwhelm France at the end of the eighteenth century? when at peace with all the world, she was governed by a mild, just, and conscientious monarch; and when she was so far from alarming the whole system by ambitious views of preponderance, that she gave not the slightest umbrage to her nearest neighbours\*? None of the continental states could be profited by the ruin of France; not one of them could hope to rise by her degradation. Among the very abundant political combinations of the age, there is not the smallest vestige of a conspiracy against her. The author of any such scheme would have been ridiculed as a visionary projector at every court in Europe. What then could have united all nations in an enterprise for which no one had

\* Vide Note Z.

the smallest motive or inclination, or any reasonable hope of success ?

It is perfectly natural, that a person desirous of gaining credit for so absurd an opinion, should recur for that purpose to the all-explaining influence of England ; the only power that could be conceived inimical to the security and independence of France. But what childish credulity must the man suppose in his readers, who can attempt to persuade them that the powers of the continent were all leagued against that nation, merely to gratify England ! that those powers, seized with one common mania, departed from all policy, sense, and justice ; that they sacrificed every interest and advantage on the same pile with the elaborate structure of an admirable federal constitution—to make England sole mistress of the seas ! To give the smallest colour of probability to so extravagant a combination, so monstrous an absurdity, some facts, or something at least in the shape of facts, ought to have been appealed to. But where are they to be found ? Who has ever attempted to adduce the slightest proof of all this ? And though amidst the greatest confusion, and in the darkest periods of the revolution, when the minds of men, inflamed by the wildest passions, and smarting under the severest sufferings, eagerly pursued every chimera,

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and caught at every wonder to explain their inexplicable fortunes ; though there were then some impudent declaimers, who in some degree successfully represented the wickedness of the British ministry as the cause of all the afflictions of Europe ; yet how could a writer of the YEAR 8 associate with such incorrigible impostors ? How could a politician, professedly calm and impartial, give way to such gross excesses of revolutionary violence ? How could he be so ignorant or unmindful of history, as to attribute to England the origin of a war, that had lasted nearly eight months, before it ceased to be doubtful, whether that nation would maintain the strictest neutrality amidst the dissensions of the continent ?

No ! If that accursed war, which has overwhelmed the federal system of Europe, was indeed the effect of a general, premeditated, systematic confederacy against France, the object of that confederacy was at least very different from what the author has asserted. If there ever was a coalition, and if the plans of that coalition did really produce the war, it was neither jealousy of France, nor a desire to weaken and degrade, nor any ridiculous project of dismembering that kingdom, that constituted its origin and intent. It was formed not against France, but the revolution ; it was not the ascendant of the French nation,

nation, (what ground of alarm could that afford in the year 1791 ?) but its hopeless distractions, that drew down the unexpected storm upon Europe.

It would be foreign to my purpose to enter into a particular discussion of the causes of this war\*. It is an inexhaustible subject, on which politicians will be long divided ; and if similarity of views and uniformity of opinion are ever to be attained in this intricate question, it can only be in other times, and among other men ; when truth shall have prevailed over all hypotheses. At present I shall merely submit my private opinion ; and though none of my readers should be inclined to follow it, I am firmly persuaded I shall be able to prove most satisfactorily, that our Author has established his upon a system devoid of all foundation.

It has always been my opinion (and I know many enlightened statesmen think the same), that the war was not produced by a coalition against France ; that, in the strict sense of the word, such a coalition never has existed, and would have remained an empty speculation, an idle dream of a few ministers, if France had not compelled the powers of Europe, in a certain degree, to realize it. Even after this, when the

\* Vide Note A A.

common danger was at the highest, the coalition was only a name without meaning. The war was resorted to and commenced by France herself, that is, by the dreadful succession of outrageous and barbarous factions which enslaved, distracted, and tyrannized over her during ten years. What rendered it inevitable, was the wide difference between those reigning factions and the rest of Europe, in their systems of administration, and in all their principles of internal and external policy; which created a discordance not to be remedied by any peaceful measures. The revolutionary chiefs, aware of all this, and feeling the precariousness of their own situations, resorted to the war as the only means of maintaining themselves, or as the last refuge of their despair; and they would have contrived to involve all Europe in this misfortune, even though every government had been anxious to avoid it, even had they coalesced to preserve peace. Unimpelled by any coalition, at a time when the very name did not yet exist, and not a vestige of it was perceptible, they challenged successively every nation, near or remote, continental or maritime, and at length made one general declaration of war against every ancient establishment. Thus Europe had no alternative but the dangers of the contest on the one hand, and perhaps still greater danger, with which, on the

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the other, those demagogues threatened the very elements of the social constitution.

Such appears to me to be the origin of the war upon the French revolution : for either there never has been a war against France, or it has only been a consequence of the other. In this opinion I may be wrong : but the mistake is certainly not owing to prejudice or want of reflection. My judgment has been formed by a studious observation of the characters and actions of the two great parties in the awful contest which, during ten years, has desolated Europe. On the one hand, I have incessantly watched the fate and progress of the revolution, the speeches and writings of its chiefs, and the manifold testimonies they themselves afford in the accusations and replies with which each declining or fallen party threw the blame of the war on its successful adversaries. On the other hand, I have carefully examined and compared every document and correspondence laid before the public, and all those imaginary treaties said to be the basis of the coalition ; I have collected every authentic information concerning the opinions, views, and conduct of its pretended founders and patrons. Lastly, my opinion is supported by the solemn, unanimous assurances of many highly respected statesmen ; to whose

authority in a problem of this nature, I may surely be permitted to refer.

Having thus declared my opinion, I will push impartiality so far as to set it entirely aside, and will endeavour, if possible, to forget it. I intend to meet the author of the *Etat de la France* on his own grounds, and will suppose the war to have been produced by a coalition of the powers of Europe.

The first, and I think the most important, question will then be, whether such a league, when impartially considered, would be so condemnable, so unjustifiable, so impolitic, so monstrous as the Author asserts; whether it would justly incur the abuse he heaps upon it?

I will here once again declare my own opinion, without insisting upon it as a demonstrable truth.

I do not conceive it to be universally true, "that a nation has no right to interfere in the domestic affairs of any other," and I trust I shall not be singular in regarding it as liable to great exceptions. There are cases in which sound policy suggests, and the law of nations permits, an active intervention in the internal proceedings

proceedings of a foreign country. Such a case arises when there happens in any, especially if it be a principal state of Europe, a disorder so great, general, and permanent (it must have all these qualities), as manifestly to endanger the neighbouring powers. Those powers are still more justified in not remaining inactive spectators of such disorders, when there are several parties contending for the government of the distracted country upon various pretences ; and the right of legislation is disputed by a variety of claimants. I regard the French revolution as an event of this kind, not merely permitting, but absolutely requiring the active interference of other nations. The all-destructive principles upon which it was founded, the criminal excesses and contempt of every right that attended its progress, would have justified an early opposition. The constitution of 1791, instead of diminishing, strengthened and confirmed the right of interference ; for no one, even in France, will now deny that it was calculated to organize the anarchy, and of course to prolong the miseries of the unhappy country, and the dangers of its neighbours. What completed, and gave, as it were, the ultimate sanction to this right, was the scene that presented itself immediately after the introduction of that constitution. The popular members of the National Assembly, and the favourite orators of the clubs

(the men who at that time governed the country), then poured forth the torrent of their abuse and calumny against all the governments of Europe ; they commenced an inveterate persecution of every ancient establishment, of every sacred principle that ensured the obedience of the citizen, and the safety of the throne ; they called upon all people to throw off their allegiance ; and their speeches and writings were a series of reiterated insults that announced every day more openly the hostilities they were resolved to realize with other weapons.

Under these circumstances, a coalition against the *destroyers of France*, not against France herself, would have been prudent, just, and beneficial ; in every thing the reverse of a wicked conspiracy. It would not however have deserved this meritorious character, unless conceived and projected upon principles pure and disinterested, with views liberal and enlightened. Every idea of partition, dismemberment, or subjection, being inadmissible, the complete independence of France should have been the first article, the most sacred and inviolable stipulation of the league. Nor should any foreign power have assumed the right of prescribing a new constitution ; for that would have been out of the province, beyond the just policy of its intervention. A

stranger in such a case has nothing more to do than to remove every unnatural obstacle to a proper constitution, to facilitate the restoration of law and order, and to give freedom to the lawful depository of sovereign authority. Here must end all foreign interference ; the rest is entirely a domestic concern, to be left to the energy, skill, and wisdom of those intrusted with the business of regenerating the distracted state.

This I conceive to be the only tenable opinion on a subject which the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has seen in a different light : for he has put a very hateful, and I think very false construction upon the plan of such a coalition. Among other things, he says, " Can any man reconcile an undertaking of this nature to the true principles of a federal system ? Can it be asserted that those who contrived that immense combination of offensive relations, were actuated by views of general interest ? Can they be said to have intended to distinguish the rights of the continental and maritime powers, to define the just limits, and secure the independence of each ? Could this engagement, so hastily and unadvisedly made, be of long duration ?" &c. Immediately after this, he says, " A league of this nature is necessarily in opposition to the principles which should be the groundwork of every alliance ;" the



“ the nations so leagued were never allies ;” and, “ because they found no word in the political dictionary, whereby to denote their monstrous convention, they were forced to invent a new one ; and to give the term *coalition* to that which will be more properly denominated in future histories, a conspiracy against the rights of a single people, and a solemn, premeditated renunciation of every principle of the law of nations.”

What can we expect to find but nonsense, contradiction, and unnatural combinations, if we attempt to apply the principles that should regulate every ordinary alliance, to a league quite extraordinary in its nature ? A coalition neither is, nor ever can be, an alliance. Whether in earlier times the word coalition has been used in the sense now given to it, is a question of little import ; the thing itself has existed at all times, or might at least have existed at any time. It is evident, that amidst the great variety of social revolutions, there must sometimes occur cases, in which a temporary, urgent, and truly common interest, may suspend every usual federative relation, and unite all nations in the prosecution of a common object, without regard to the similitude or diversity of their permanent views. Such an union must always be transient as the interest  
which

which creates it ; but, while it does exist, it operates in a manner peculiar to itself. An alliance, that is, a permanent league formed for the maintenance of certain permanent interests—an alliance of all Europe against a single power, is utterly inconsistent with any principles of genuine politics : a coalition, the effect of extraordinary circumstances, may sometimes be enjoined by necessity ; and will then be approved by prudence, and sanctioned by every principle of justice.

This very important distinction takes all weight from what the Author has said about the “ gigantic and visionary association of the European powers :” his severe and angry animadversions have no longer an object or a meaning. What have we to do with an alliance, a permanent similarity of interests, the possibility of long duration ? What with the continental and maritime nations, the distinction of their rights, and security of their respective limits ? These, with every thing else the Author has supposed, sought, and found wanting in this “ monstrous confederacy,” are quite foreign to the subject. The whole business is simply a temporary junction of the strength of all nations, in order to obviate a common danger : till that danger be averted, till the all-threatening revolution be divested of its hostile and formidable character, brought within bounds,

and rendered incapable of mischief; till then, but no longer, the private interests of Austria, Prussia, Spain, and England, must all be confounded in a more important consideration—the maintenance of the social constitution. This being completely secured, every thing would return to its former state; the ordinary federal principles would again prevail, and Europe resume her natural character, and submit to her ancient laws. It is not more consistent with true federal policy to call such a compact “a solemn abjuration of all principle,” than it is agreeable to the just notions of the law of nations to term it an “atrocious conspiracy,” or “a wanton attempt upon the liberties of France.”

I am well aware that the right of one nation to interfere in the domestic affairs of another (the first principle upon which the foregoing argument is founded), so far from being universally acknowledged, is, on the contrary, rejected unconditionally, and in every possible case, by many political writers. But however various the opinions of men on this important point, there is surely nobody so intolerant as to admit of none but his own. Let us then, in order to grant every thing for the moment, suppose it doubtful whether such a coalition were justifiable, even in the very extraordinary and critical situation of  
Europe

Europe after the year 1789 ; let us suppose all governments to have been seduced by views positively false, are they, on account of this error, to be branded with the reproach of madness or guilt ? If it really was an error (which I am very far from thinking), it was at least a pardonable one ; pardonable on account of the magnitude of the danger ; and pardonable on account of the obvious and immense advantage to be derived from the success of a well-concerted plan. The true object, whether just or unjust, of this coalition, and the motives ascribed to it by the unprincipled sophistry of French politicians, are as different from each other, as the accidental error of a skilful calculator, from the ignorance and stupidity of a perfect idiot. Supposing the powers of Europe to have coalesced imprudently against the *French revolution*, they have not thereby incurred the reproaches they would merit, had they senselessly made war upon *France* herself.

But the last and apparently most formidable question is, whether the common safety, well or ill understood, was really the ground of this general combination ? Whether do we not attribute to its authors a degree of wisdom of which their plans were in truth utterly destitute ? And whether the idle hope of profiting by the distress of France, of weakening her for ever, of dismembering,

bering, and perhaps subduing her, did not constitute the true though secret motive of the undertaking?

To this question I have only one answer, which is involved in the following dilemma :— either there never was a coalition, in the ordinary sense of the word, the war was the sole work of revolutionary demagogues, and the confederacy in question was strictly defensive ; or the common safety of Europe was the only object of that coalition. The latter part of the alternative is proved in a few words ; *it could have no other motive.* Whatever temerity, perfidy, or folly, may be imputed to, or imagined of this or that government, it is impossible to suppose it ever could be the wish, the interest, or the aim of all Europe to dismember or ruin France. Suppose Austria to have projected a coalition in order to despoil her of some provinces ; suppose England to have done the same with a view to extinguish the French navy ; it will still remain inconceivable how Prussia, Spain, Sardinia, Sweden, Russia, the States of Germany and Italy, and even the Ottoman Porte, were drawn into this senseless league. The trite and trivial recourse to intrigue and bribery, and Heaven knows what secret and magic arts, now meets with contempt  
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and ridicule throughout Europe, as an exploded fable. How careless of truth, how deficient in argument the person who can mention a handful of guineas as the cause of a coalition of Europe against France ! as the origin of a league in which the most heterogeneous elements combined ; in which the natural friends and natural enemies of France were ranged on the same side ; and in which, according to the principles of ordinary politics, it is impossible to imagine, much more to ascertain and define, a common object ! How far above all ordinary considerations must be the aim of a confederacy, which, instead of affording any prospect of advantage to its members in general, exacted many painful sacrifices ; and which exposed them to a multitude of dangers to encounter a single evil ; an evil big indeed with the greatest of all dangers !

This then is the only alternative : a coalition on the most justifiable grounds, or no coalition. Every other view of the subject must be imaginary or absurd. To me the choice appears by no means dubious. I believe it to be the misfortune of Europe, that there never has existed a coalition in the true sense of the word. There was nothing at the beginning of the war in the least resembling it. The loose and undefined  
league

league to which we now give the appellation, was produced by the urgency of a common danger, and the immediate necessity of defence : it was not the result of a regular, preconcerted system of attack. But if ever this opinion shall be refuted, if some archive, yet a secret, some more authentic document than the treaties of Pavia, Pilnitz, Mantua, &c. should afford the future historian of these melancholy times, indisputable proofs of a premeditated, systematic, and offensive coalition, though it were only of a few leading states ; I here confidently assert beforehand, that it will not confirm one syllable of what the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has imputed to such a league, and that the general welfare of Europe will be found its only object. If there ever has been a coalition, and in whatever degree it may have existed, this must have been its only basis : it could have no other\*.

We cannot therefore ascribe the war to the defects of the federal constitution, either before or after the year 1789 ; for it was in every respect foreign to the good or bad maxims and combinations, to the happy or unsuccessful efforts of ordinary politics. It was an unnatural and unforeseen event that confounded and defied all human calculation ; it was the revolution pro-

\* Vide Note B B.

duced this terrible war. The revolution, and that alone, overturned the political system by an unfortunate attempt to support it ; dissolved every federal obligation, subverted and demolished every pillar of the balance of power, and converted the federal constitution of Europe into a scene of anarchy and confusion, whence no human skill or wisdom will speedily deliver it without the miraculous interference of Providence.

That Europe, in its present unnatural and helpless condition—the dreadful result of ten successive years of convulsions and misfortune—that Europe now possesses no federal constitution, now scarce retains any public law, is a melancholy truth, in which all parties seem to agree. The Author of the *Etat de la France* is far from doubting it. The peculiarity of his arbitrary, sophistical, and paradoxical reasoning consists in his attempt to deduce from an earlier period the source of the general disorder ; to withdraw the first and only cause of it, by an artful misrepresentation, from the eyes of his contemporaries ; and thus, if successful, to exempt and purify his country from the everlasting reproach of having brought so dreadful a misfortune upon civil society.



But where the connexion between cause and effect is so obvious as to strike the meanest understanding, and catch the most inexperienced eye, all the efforts of sophistry must necessarily be vain. The only difference of opinion, the only doubts that have hitherto prevailed, have been concerning the authors of the war ; and we may safely predict, that even these will soon be dispelled by the light of truth ; so that France, as well as every other nation, will point the curses of the present, and the abhorrence of future ages where they are really due. But sophistry will now attempt in vain to dispel the conviction, that Europe owes the dangers and distress of her present situation entirely to the revolution and its consequent war.

I shall not minutely examine the causes that have rendered the present war so destructive in its character, and so unfortunate to most of the nations concerned in it ; of which the dangerous preponderance of France has been the last, most important, and permanent effect. I shall confine myself to a few observations, of which the truth is too evident to expose me to contradiction. That series of misfortunes was not a simple phenomenon ; it was the result of circumstances extremely complex and intricate. On the one  
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hand genius and depravity, and on the other inevitable inferiority, with deplorable, perhaps condemnable weakness, assisted each other to produce it. It is difficult to say which was the principal of these co-operating causes; but each must be taken into the account; each was at once cause and effect, each at once an original principle and complementary condition of the other. Future ages will do ample justice to the extraordinary energy and steady perseverance, the unshaken intrepidity and military talents, the daring enterprises and inexhaustible resources of war displayed by France amidst the storms of the revolution, to the wondering nations of Europe in arms. But history will remind us, too, that this extraordinary vigour grew from the same root with a no less extraordinary depravity; and that the means of such unheard-of efforts, such gigantic enterprises, could only be afforded by a revolution that trampled on all rights, tore down every barrier of civil polity, and gave a loose to every irregular passion. Moreover, this enormous military greatness is less a subject of wonder, when we reflect that every social and civil consideration, the interests of justice, and even of humanity, the welfare, and in a certain degree the existence of a great nation, the rich harvest of the past, and

the seeds of the future, were sacrificed to that splendid but unprofitable greatness.

On the other hand it is evident that the powers leagued against the revolution could not imitate the proceedings, adopt the measures, and use the means of the common enemy, without risking all they were contending for, and introducing to their own countries the very evils they were combating : the difference always existing between the resources of a coalition and those of a revolutionary government, produced the necessary inferiority of the enemies of France. But it is equally evident that this unavoidable disproportion, this necessary inferiority, are far from being sufficient to explain all the events of our times. Some evil genius seems to have perplexed the councils of every cabinet, and paralyzed their political and military energies ; for it has been their fate to meet the most trying difficulties with pitiful projects, half measures, weak and incapable instruments, and a deplorable deficiency of every thing the magnitude of the occasion required. They too late, if ever, learned the character of their enemy, and how to combat revolutionary weapons and resources. There was no plan, coherence, or uniformity in their proceedings ; no

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two of them were of one opinion. Their unfortunate dissensions, the fatal influence of their private interests, their want of unanimity and concert, the tardiness and indecision of their measures, redoubled the strength and courage of their enemy. Capable at most of a **weak** and partial defence, unequal to a vigorous and uniform attack, they formed no effective coalition, but were merely a reluctant assemblage of ill-according parts. They were, in short, unfortunately for the interests of Europe, any thing imaginable, except what the subtle declamations of the enemy, and the easy credulity of the age, have represented and believed.

The issue of a war so conducted between such parties, could not be doubtful, and, in fact, was exactly such as had been predicted by all men of judgment and penetration. The first of its unfortunate results was the entire failure of the original and only object of the coalesced powers. While they were all wasting their strength, and many of them hastening to ruin, the revolution was triumphant; the most scandalous enormities remained unpunished; the perpetrators of the most atrocious crimes that ever disgraced the earth, ascended the throne of Lewis XIV. assumed a plenitude of authority to which the power of that mighty despot bears no  
P 3 comparison,

comparison, and drowned the monarchy of France in the blood of its last defenders. But this was not all; they overran the neighbouring states; they devoured the substance of the richest countries in Europe; they carried the symbol of their tyranny under the name of the Tree of Liberty, through an hundred provinces; they extended their territory on all sides by conquest, by forced alliances, or by compulsory treaties; and when all this was accomplished, resistance no longer possible, the dominion of the revolutionary rulers established, and the balance of Europe irrecoverably lost; the single hope that yet remained—that of seeing the monstrous edifice fall to pieces of itself—suddenly vanished; the scene changed, and this colossal fabric, these new resources, these territorial acquisitions, these forced connexions, this military power and terrible preponderance, were all consolidated in the hands of a regular, skilful, and comparatively popular government. The old revolutionary system was demolished as a useless pile. No principle of rule was now acknowledged but the will and ambition of the reigning party, and the genius of its chief; and this government, thus strengthened and consolidated, gave laws to a great part of Europe.

Such



Such is the state of things at the present moment \*. The political system which resisted the violence of so many storms until the French revolution, and whose strong foundations had defied the vicissitudes of fortune, and the lapse of time, has been converted into a heap of ruins by the revolution, and its necessary companion the war. Europe, say the friends as well as enemies of the preponderant power; Europe has entirely lost its balance. Let us now proceed to inquire if there be any hope of seeing it re-established.

\* The autumn of 1801. Some important changes have since taken place, and, alas! they do but confirm Mr. Genz's conclusions; they cast a deeper shade upon his very gloomy picture. The preponderance he deprecates, has received additional extension. While politicians are complaining of the sinking balance, the Gallic Chief throws his sword into the scale; and "*va visis*" is the answer, if afflicted Europe should venture to remonstrate. After what they have already suffered, the powers of the continent may submit to this.

TRANS.

## PART III.



### CHAP. I.

*Of the present Relations between France and the other European States.*

**B**EFORE I enter upon the thorny path that now awaits me, I must premise a few observations to explain as much as possible the point from which I set out ; and from which alone the course of my reasoning can be fairly traced and judged. I hope thereby not only to secure myself against wilful misrepresentation, but even to disarm that lawful criticism which does not exceed the limits of its province.

Politics, or, more properly, the diplomatic branch of them, consist of two elements of different natures :

1st, An accurate knowledge of the peculiar relations of every state : 2dly, The talent of estimating the capacities and characters of the principal

principal actors on the great stage of public affairs, so as to form a correct judgment of the nature and object of their views, and of the influence and probable consequences of their conduct in every political transaction. The rules by which a statesman should on all occasions be guided, ought to be founded upon a due combination of these two principles.

It is obvious, that politics, as far as it depends upon personal characters and dispositions, is only an art, since these relations can never be the object of a science. The opinions, inclinations, and passions, the talents and abilities of individuals cannot be reduced to general rules : they are various and irregular as nature. Long study, much observation, a frequent intercourse with the world, and great natural penetration, improved by habit and experience, into a talent of divination, are the indispensable requisites to a diplomatic statesman. The deepest researches, the most extensive knowledge, all the advantages of an excellent understanding improved by habits of reflection, will not supply these qualities, or compensate the want of them.

Practical politics must necessarily be imperfect as a science ; for a considerable part of it depends upon these personal considerations,  
and



and the art of observing and directing them. Its most elaborate and profound calculations are constantly baffled by the influence of human opinions and actions ; its apparently most infallible conclusions are frequently disappointed by a single change in the fate of one important personage ; by a striking thought, a moment of weakness or passion, by a whim, a capricious fit of favour or disgust. Its most fatal enemy is death, which frequently defeats its speculations, because it seldom forms a part of them. The decease of a single person has often destroyed the work and combinations of a century ; the appearance of one new actor on the great theatre of the world has brought about events which the boldest and most ingenious politicians could not have discovered by an age of meditation.

But however necessary, in all political calculations, to keep those circumstances constantly in mind, and not to carry the science beyond its unalterable limits ; it would on the other hand be extremely improper to attach too little importance to the elementary and essential part of politics. I call that the essential part which relates to the absolute and relative strength of nations ; and requires a knowledge of all their fundamental and permanent relations ; their geographical situations, the political and military security

security of their frontiers, their wants, their powers, their means of invasion or resistance, the natural and constant objects of their industry, and their several predominant interests. These are, perhaps, the most important articles in the vocabulary of politics ; because they are the most permanent, and in some measure the only permanent objects. Whatever changes may take place in the opinions and passions, the dispositions and capacities of men, the inclinations and aversions of princes ; there will always be certain fixed and immutable points in the changeable sphere of politics ; always some fundamental relations, some principles of action, which no accidental change can alter or destroy. A great and powerful country, advantageously situated, will, even under a government comparatively weak, always be capable of greater efforts to resist or attack an enemy, than a small, defenceless, and divided state, though governed by a prince of extraordinary abilities. A nation whose power is supported by commerce and industry, will on all occasions act on other principles than a state whose greatness rests principally or entirely upon military strength. Amidst the combinations of private views and passions, there must always exist some natural alliances and rivalships among nations. The true, that is, the permanent and fundamental, interest of each, will,

soon

soon or late, prevail, however perverted, disguised, or concealed, by the temper or the errors of the moment. Political calculations, founded upon these principles, will never be entirely disappointed, never ultimately useless, notwithstanding accidental changes and exceptions.

There are therefore two extremes to be avoided with equal care in all political reckonings. On the one hand, the opinion that the permanent relations of states are alone to be considered; and on the other, that they are entitled to no consideration at all. With the first of these the *art*, with the second the *science* of politics must fall. To acquire true notions, whereby to regulate our conduct in politics, we must first study the fundamental relations of every state in their whole extent; and then always be mindful of the changes that may possibly be occasioned in these by the personal circumstances, the principles, the character, and private opinions of their rulers.

I shall here confine myself to these permanent relations, setting aside all consideration of persons. I consider any nation dangerous to the tranquillity of others when it wants nothing to injure them but the will; whether it be governed by virtuous or depraved characters, guided by  
true

true or false principles. On the other hand, regard the situation of a country as helpless and precarious, without adverting to the possibility of its being exalted above all its dangers by the exertions of an extraordinary prince, and so raised to a higher degree of power and independence : here again I judge without reference to any thing personal, and conclude a nation to be weak and defenceless, when some unusual occurrence (such as the birth of a pre-eminent genius) is necessary to its preservation and security.

Many of my readers will perhaps think me blameable for adhering strictly to this rule, in a picture where FRANCE is the principal figure. But to this blame I must submit ; because the method I have adopted appears to me the safest as well as the most equitable. It is true, indeed, that the personal relations of men in power, can never affect a political question in a higher degree, than where the subject is—a nation immediately issuing from a great revolution. Much more depends in such a case than in any other, upon the character of the government, and the probability of a change in its component parts. But if I renounce many important arguments derivable from these peculiar circumstances, I am the more certain that even the friends of the French government will not invalidate my reasoning.

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The following observations on the political and federal situation of France, are therefore entirely confined to her real and permanent relations. I abstain from inquiring how far the personal character and principles of her present government deserve the confidence, or justify the distrust of other nations. Its partisans assure us it has renounced all revolutionary projects, and directs its views to safety, peace, and justice only: others assert, that its moderation is but a new cloak for old maxims, which conceals the same ambition and perfidy, the same oppression and systematic tyranny that characterized the ruling faction in every period of the revolution. These opinions I leave to the practical statesman, whose conduct must be materially influenced by them, and to the future historian, whose province it will be to relate and judge the proceedings of this government hereafter. Neither shall I inquire whether the duration of the present constitution of France be within the sphere of human probability. I will suppose it durable; could its warmest advocate require more? What I am now going to say of France is entirely independent of any such inquiry, and must be equally true, whether a Bonaparte, a Robespierre, or a Bourbon be at the head of the French government.

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We have already examined the state of France before the revolution, her security, her means of defence, and the nature of her frontiers ; in all of which she had nothing left to desire. She was more happy in the first requisite to a good federal position than any nation in Europe. Her conquests, in the last ten years, are a powerful addition to her security. She stood in no need of them whatever, and has thus acquired a superfluity of political and federal strength. She was secure against every attack with her ancient frontiers ; with her newly-extended limits she may bid defiance to the plans and efforts of all Europe.

But however secure and powerful this kingdom was in its ancient state, there were always several powers in Europe capable of curbing its ambitious views of inordinate aggrandizement, and restraining its attempts upon the peace and safety of others, as often as it betrayed such dangerous designs. It was constantly counterpoised by Austria, Prussia, or England ; and if any of these was not singly strong enough to counteract its efforts, it was then effected by a well-directed combination of their means. France was, moreover, surrounded by several independent states, which, though comparatively of little weight, yet served to break the force of the first attack ;

gave

gave time to the leading powers to assemble and prepare for defence ; and, united with them, contributed to preserve the balance at all times. *This system is entirely destroyed.*

The chief bulwark of the north of Germany, and consequently of the north of Europe, was the independence of HOLLAND. This rich and respected republic had, in former times, often resisted the attempts of France, with her own well-directed strength in the hands of skilful and intrepid leaders. She gradually declined from her former greatness after the peace of Utrecht ; but until the French revolution she neither wanted strength nor resources to make head against an enemy ; and her political alliances were such as to ensure the maintenance of her rank and influence. The torrent of the revolution has irrecoverably overwhelmed her, and she is now erased from the list of independent states. Holland has been a province of France since the year 1795. And supposing any favourable change to relieve her from her present abject dependance, it is not possible to conceive how she could recover any material part of her former importance. Her strength is exhausted, her frontier towns are lost ; and Belgium in the hands of France, leaves not the smallest hope of better times. Holland is therefore a part of the dominions

nions of France, and will be considered as such in every future war. Her independence was formerly a safeguard to the north of Europe : that safeguard is now no more.

The AUSTRIAN NETHERLANDS were the next rampart between France and the north of Germany. These provinces were, perhaps, more burdensome than productive to Austria ; they were constantly exposed to the arms of France, and their distance from the main body of the Austrian dominions rendered it very difficult and expensive to defend them. It must likewise be confessed, that a more liberal view of the subject would lead to a wish that these provinces, the object and theatre of so many wars, had long been otherwise disposed of\*. But however that may be, it is certain, that, so long as France did not possess them, the Austrian Netherlands were a great protection to the north of Germany. That France should commence her operations against Germany, on the Meuse, or at her former frontiers, is a difference of no small importance ; that she should be able to penetrate immediately into the interior of Germany, instead of consuming one or more campaigns in the conquest of Flanders, is an immense advantage.

\* Vide Note C C.



The third bulwark of the Empire against France in the North, was that large portion of German territory that lay between the Rhine and the French dominions. This country, possessing two of the strongest fortresses in Europe, and a number of excellent military positions, was well suited, like the Netherlands, to break the force of a first attack. The passage of the Rhine (in many places an enterprise of little difficulty) is now the only obstacle to prevent the French armies from over-running all the northern circles of the Empire as far as the Weser or the Elbe.

The three safeguards thus lost to Germany, were the more important as they protected the provinces least defended by art or nature. The history of the last war has indeed afforded more than one sad example of the insufficiency of art or nature to oppose the progress of a victorious army; and has shown that the south, as well as the north of Germany, is not impregnable to an enterprising enemy; but it must be allowed that the country between the Mayne and the Alps presents many more difficulties to an invasion, than the district between the Mayne and the North Sea. The last is every where open, containing scarcely a tenable place, hardly one fortified or difficult pass, as far as the frontiers of the hereditary dominions of the House of Brandenburg.

burg. One or two pitched battles will always decide the fate of this country, with which the fortunes of the north of Europe are necessarily connected. The extraordinary coincidence of circumstances that shielded the north of Germany from immediate danger at the most alarming period of the war, rendered her less sensible of the loss of her ancient ramparts, and less anxious about the consequences ; otherwise, the cession of the Rhine districts to the masters of Flanders and Holland, and the treaty by which the Rhine was made the boundary of France and Germany, would have been objects of greater solicitude, more earnest complaints, and more effectual opposition.

Neither is the south of Germany so secure as it was before the revolution. There too the Empire has been deprived of its most important bulwark ; for such was Switzerland. The neutrality of this fortress of nature, this impregnable position, this central point of all military operations, a neutrality consecrated by ages, is no more : let us not indulge in groundless hopes, it is destroyed for ever. At present there is not the smallest prospect of a favourable change ; for Switzerland is a province, a place of arms, an intrenched camp of France. Should any political revolution, should the spontaneous moderation of the

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French government restore its liberty, it could never resume its former independence. The tacit agreement of the leading powers to spare it in their several undertakings ; the respect for its wise and inflexible neutrality, rather the effect of ancient custom, than of policy or moderation : all this is annihilated for ever. In every future war Switzerland will be held by the boldest and readiest competitor. France must at all events maintain a great and permanent influence in its domestic concerns, and will no doubt, at all times, and under all circumstances, consider and use it as her property. Here then is an end of all safety for Swabia, Bavaria, and the foremost provinces of the Austrian monarchy ! At the first signal for war, the troops of France will pour down from the summits of the Alps upon the south of the Empire ; and as Switzerland forms a great point of communication between Germany and Italy, the operations of the French, planned and executed upon the new system of warfare, must acquire an extent, continuity, and vigour, to which the neighbouring nations can oppose no adequate resistance.

The states of the King of Sardinia were formerly a barrier between Italy and France. That monarch was not improperly called the *guardian of the Alps*. For though incapable of effectually opposing

opposing either of the powers that so often contested the possession of Italy, and though by no means so powerful as the interests of that country and of Europe required ; yet his geographical situation, and his many excellent fortresses, gave him no small degree of importance, and considerable means of defence. While Europe retained its ancient constitution, neither France nor Austria could indulge a hope of conquering and subjecting Italy. The ruler of Piedmont and Savoy was the natural ally of the opponent of such projects.

This system is now irrecoverably lost. Savoy is for ever united to France ; and the fortified places of Piedmont are all in the hands of the French government. The future destiny of this country, and of the King of Sardinia, lies buried in the obscurity of the future ; but we may confidently predict, that the most favourable turn of the present crisis can never restore the former state of things. Should the King of Sardinia be re-established in the sovereignty of Piedmont, he would hardly recover his frontier towns, the essence of his strength and the bulwark of Italy. Even if these should be restored, yet with France on one side, and the vassals of France on every other, he would himself be nothing more than a vassal, an impotent vassal of the republican chief.

The obedience of the Cisalpine republic is forever secured to the power whence it derives its existence : the submission of Genoa, Parma, Tuscany, are alike implicit and invariable. Before the treaty of Luneville, the manifestos of France declared, " The interests of Europe require that Austria do not pass the Adige." The meaning of this maxim is no longer an enigma. The Adige is the boundary of Austria ; but it is the boundary of France also. The whole of Italy is neither more nor less than a French province. French generals, and French commissaries, give the law from the Alps to the Straits of Messina ; and if the consular authority should resolve tomorrow to convert all Italy into one republic, under the protection of France, or to incorporate its provinces with the great nation, the important operation would cost the Chief Consul nothing more than an order to his military lieutenant, to promulgate his sovereign decree\*.

An undisturbed alliance had subsisted between France and Spain since the year 1762 ; and as France was greatly more powerful than her ally, there was a disproportion in the connexion that

\* The fact has proved the possibility more speedily than even Mr. Genz could have expected. He would probably have described the very manner in which this event was to happen, had it not been a part of his plan to avoid all allusion to personal character.—TRANS.

led to the dependance of Spain. The Spanish government, however, preserved a certain degree of independence, until the commencement of the revolution, and France did not enjoy an unlimited control of the councils and resources of her ally. This is now entirely altered: Spain has not preserved a remnant of freedom or independence; when France commands, she must be obeyed, though the utter ruin of the Spanish monarchy were the necessary consequence. The words of Lewis XIV. "There are no longer any Pyrennees for France," have been more literally true since the year 1795, than when he spoke them. The expenses of a conquest have been spared; but the conquest of Spain is nevertheless complete. That nation has vanished from the list of independent states, in every political and federal respect; and the power it may hereafter possess, must be looked upon merely as an addition to the resources of France, and be estimated as such in every political calculation.

It is not therefore enough to say that France has extended her limits on all sides by conquest; has added to the impregnability of her frontiers by new ramparts, and increased her influence over the neighbouring states in a formidable degree: the truth is, that France, in her present state, is contained by no limits; every thing round about her either is really, if not nominally,

her territory and property, or may be made a part of her possessions, at the first convenient opportunity, by the nod of her sovereign. Spain, Italy, and Germany, without fortresses, without means of defence, without security political or military, are open to the attacks of France : and it now only depends upon the moderation and justice of the French government (mere personal guarantees, which every moment may alter or destroy), whether France shall rule alone in the whole west of Europe, whether any law shall be obeyed but hers.

The foundation upon which this enormous power was first raised, and still continues to rest, is by no means frail or precarious. The military greatness of France, the joint result of the revolution and the most unfortunate of all wars, is not, as many people hope, a transitory meteor. It is thoroughly interwoven with the essential principles of the French republic ; it is a fundamental part of its constitution, its politics and government ; and is so inseparably connected with its character and existence, that a cessation of this military preponderance, and the total dissolution of the republic, may be said to be synonymous. Amidst the storms of the last ten years, the French nation has become entirely military ; it has cultivated the art of war at the expense of every other : accustomed to victory, the ambi-  
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tion of military fame is now the characteristic feature, the use of arms the ordinary occupation, and war the natural element of the French. Even the internal solidity of their present constitution depends entirely upon the constant predominance of a military force : nothing but a military government (which, however, need not be tyrannical) can coerce and restrain a people who have lost every element of polity, and every principle of peaceful subordination in the convulsions of a ten years revolution ; among whom force is become the only measure of authority, and anarchy the only substitute of law and order. When in such a state the springs of military power are relaxed, the decline and ruin of the civil constitution are at hand. The slightest view of the subject must convince any man, whether friend or enemy, that the capacities, inclinations, habits, characters, and interests of her present rulers will justify no other conclusion.

If to this military power, this extensive territory, this unlimited control of so many nations ; if to all the former and present advantages of France, we add the terror which she has spread around her, and which is now the predominant sentiment of Europe : is there in the whole extent of the continent, a nation capable of maintaining, alone, a contest with such a power ? I shall spare myself the melancholy task  
of



of entering minutely into the discussion of this truth, and of developing all its painful consequences. The disproportion is clear and evident to every spectator: the history of the war of the revolution, and particularly of the campaigns of 1799 and 1800, is one continued and incontrovertible comment upon it. I say nothing of extraordinary conjunctures: I will not say that some new power may not be formed, some great genius may not arise hereafter, to avenge afflicted Europe of the mortifications she has received from victorious France; but the present state of affairs, the natural course of things, and the usual estimation of strength, encourage no such prospect. No nation on the continent, unless compelled by the necessity of self-defence, would singly hazard a war with France. If, therefore, it be yet possible to check her inordinate ascendant, and recover the balance of Europe, there must be a counterpoise formed by a combination of several powers. But should a nearer examination display insurmountable difficulties in the way of such a confederacy; should the possibility of its existence or the efficacy of its operation be highly dubious; the answer, though a very comfortable one, will then readily be found to the question; "What guaranty does there now exist of our federal constitution?"

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In the first place, it can hardly be disputed that AUSTRIA or PRUSSIA must be principally engaged in every effectual coalition against France. The other powers of Europe can never combat her ascendant, but in concert with one or both of these, by their means, and as their allies. Supposing Russia able to cope singly with France, yet they have no immediate point of contact, and the immense intervening space renders all active operations between them impossible, unless some more neighbouring nation should side with Russia. Besides, however dangerous France may become to the safety and independence of her neighbours, it never can be the interest of Russia to stand up alone in opposition to plans, of which she must necessarily be the last to feel the effects. The power of Russia, if ever again it be engaged in a war with France, will act no other part than that of an auxiliary. England, whenever it interferes in the concerns of the continent, must do the same. If France were bent upon subduing the whole continent, England alone could not prevent it : England can only act against her as an auxiliary in a general war, in concert with Austria or Prussia, or both of them.

The whole question therefore, concerning the stability of the present federal system, is reduced to this : How far are Austria and Prussia enabled  
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to protect themselves and the nations connected with them, against the power of France? Before the revolution, such a question would have been easily answered. The power of Austria had been a counterpoise to that of France since the beginning of the sixteenth century; sometimes alone, sometimes in alliance with others, Austria had often counteracted the attempts of her ancient rival in Germany and Italy. The ultimate result of all their wars, was indeed in favour of France; for if we contemplate the period that elapsed between that epoch and the year 1740, we find that she had considerably enlarged her possessions in the Netherlands and on the banks of the Rhine, and had seated princes of the House of Bourbon on two Italian thrones. But the foundations of the Austrian monarchy had never been shaken by France before the year 1740. All the plans of Lewis XIV. were baffled by the great alliances with England and Holland, which Austria successfully opposed to them; and at the treaty of Utrecht the Imperial provinces remained entire; the Empire retained all its ancient bulwarks from the Alps to the North Sea.

An important change took place in the situation of Austria after the year 1740. The elevation of the House of Brandenburg gave a new form to the Empire. Till then it had been di-

vided into a number of great and small states, who took part with or against Austria in her several wars, according to the interests or politics of their sovereigns. But when Prussia became a great and independent state, the centre as it were of a system formed by its new powers of attraction in the north of Germany; the interests of the Empire began in many important respects to be distinguished—the north from the south. The Empire was from that time divided into two parts, strongly connected with each other by a multiplicity of interests, but entirely distinct in the most essential points of their federal politics.

This new system was far from agreeable to the private interests of Austria; but considered in an enlarged point of view, it could not be but generally advantageous. There was only one case possible in which such a system could be dangerous to Europe, and especially to Germany; and of that case there was not the smallest probability till the French revolution. The schism in the Empire could have no pernicious consequence, unless the ascendant of France were such as to require its united forces to oppose her. So long as France remained in her former state, so long as either Austria or Prussia, with their occasional allies, formed a sufficient counterpoise to her power, the balance and security of Europe were unshaken;

unshaken ; and Germany and Europe enjoyed the beneficial effects of the altered constitution of the Empire, without experiencing, or even apprehending that mischief, which could only, under the above circumstances, result from it.

Two great examples have demonstrated the efficacy of that system : in the war for the succession of Charles VI. Austria, abandoned by almost every other power, stood alone against France and her numerous allies ; and maintained the contest with dignity and vigour. Prussia stood engaged with one half of Europe, in the seven years war, and supported her cause with honour and effect. Even the thirty years alliance between France and Austria, produced by the treaty of 1756, was never sufficiently powerful to threaten the independence of the north of Germany with serious danger. Had France so far departed from all the principles of rational policy, as to threaten Prussia and her allies, by means of this connexion, had Austria been blind enough to assist, even tacitly, in such an undertaking, the north of Germany, in itself neither weak nor destitute of resources, would have found support in the assistance of England and Russia. The profound peace enjoyed by Germany, unbroken but by the campaign of 1778, and even that campaign itself, sufficiently prove, that the constitution of the  
 Empire

Empire contained complete provision for the safety and integrity of the whole and every part, against all foreign or internal dangers.

But this state of division necessarily presented the greatest advantages to France as the enemy of Germany, when unforeseen, unnatural revolutions had given her such a preponderance as to require the united forces of the Empire to oppose her. Now that she has overthrown every bulwark of Germany, crushed the independence of the intermediate countries, established her sway in Holland, in the Netherlands, on the left bank of the Rhine, in Switzerland, and in Upper Italy ; now that she has even razed the few fortresses that remained on the right bank of the Rhine ; a campaign in Germany will be an enterprise of no hazard or difficulty for the French armies. Within eight days from the commencement of hostilities, the theatre of the war will be in the heart of the Empire. The immediate object of the invasion will not, as formerly, be attacked on this or that particular side, but in every part at once. If the rest of the Empire is neutral, it will speedily be surrounded. The first advantage of the enemy then opens him a way into the territories of the principal states. A destructive and decisive contest is commenced in the very heart of their dominions ; the loss of every battle is followed

lowed by such incalculable danger, leads to such dreadful consequences, as take away all courage to resist ; the lesser evil is eagerly submitted to, in order to escape from a more terrible misfortune ; and ruin, apparently inevitable, is averted by an ignominious peace. Such will be the event of every war in Germany, so long as the present system shall endure.

If it be yet possible to preserve the independence and security of Germany (whose frontiers are now defenceless and unprotected) against France, with all her late conquests, her enormous extent of territory, her consolidated military strength, and her absolute control of Holland, Italy, and Switzerland ; it can only be effected by a junction of all the powers of the Empire. Such an union cannot be produced without a good understanding between the two principal states. Is that to be expected ? This question involves, to all appearance, the future fate of Germany, and that of Europe also, since Europe can only resist the preponderance of France, by means of Germany.

Since Prussia has ranked among the principal powers of Europe ; since more than half a century, Austria and Prussia have appeared two hostile stars that threaten the whole political system with  
subversion

subversion and ruin, whenever their orbits interfered. We have seen them involved in bloody wars, engaged incessantly in plans for weakening each other ; ever vigilant, ever in alarm, each jealous of the efforts or advancement of its rival. They were allied during a short time against an evil of a most extraordinary nature ; against a most formidable and universal danger : but even this alliance sowed the seeds of fresh discord, and produced new and apparently justifiable grounds of perpetual division. The impossibility of their acting in concert, even when called upon by the greatest and most pressing danger, the strongest and most sacred motives ; this lamentable impossibility, the source of such deplorable misfortunes, has furnished the completest proof of an irreconcilable antipathy, and annihilated, not only every hope of the present, but, for those who see deeply into things, every hope of the future.

If this inveterate hatred were only the effect of passion, opinion, and prejudice, an enlightened statesman would not consider it insurmountable ; and, so far as it only rests upon such grounds, we may always entertain a hope of seeing, if not perfect harmony, at least a suspension of discordant measures between them ; a temporary agreement for a common object, and confidence and

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unanimity



unanimity in the pursuit of it. That the common notions concerning natural antipathies between governments and nations, are by no means unfounded, has been incontrovertibly proved by many deplorable examples ; but that these antipathies should have no bounds, is rejected by sound policy, because condemned by sound reason. Whenever a real interest commands, every national antipathy, though existing from the earliest times, if it only rests upon prejudice, must yield to more urgent motives ; and so it doubtless will, when the guidance of nations is intrusted to the wise and great ; to men who are above all narrow views, and superior to all little passions. The deliberate and decided measures of a truly enlightened government, intent upon important objects, break through the fetters of popular opinion, are supported by the wise, and carry the weak irresistibly along ; thus often extinguishing, in one fortunate moment, whole ages of national prejudice.

But in the case before us, the evil is more deeply rooted. The antipathy between Austria and Prussia is not founded upon a blind sentiment of aversion, jealousy, or mistrust ; is not merely the effect of long habit, or the bitter remembrance of mutual injuries. It is connected with more deep  
and

and essential causes. It has hitherto been a fundamental principle of European politics, and, under certain limitations, must always continue so. These two powers are evidently destined to balance each other ; that is their political calling, the necessary rule of their whole political conduct. Setting entirely aside all private hatred, all jealousy and animosity (which should always be excluded from the higher views of politics and government), there must ever remain in their relations, in the nature and objects of their activity, and in the very principle of their existence, a fixed and unalterable cause, not of natural or political enmity, but of natural and political opposition. They are compelled to counteract each other ; how could they then in the common course of things be permanently allied ? This necessary state of opposition was evidently conducive to the welfare of Europe, as long as its ancient constitution and relations endured, without being detrimental to those powers themselves, provided it was not suffered to exceed the bounds of true policy. Till France arrived at her present greatness, the systematic enmity of Austria and Prussia rather added to the security than to the dangers of Europe ; their conduct was in unison with the principles of legitimate politics ; and if we maturely weigh the effects of a close connexion between them, we must confess, that, had

it been possible, it would have been by no means defirable.

But since the total change which has taken place ; since the French revolution has subverted every foundation of the federal system ; since France has attained a preponderance against which every ancient guarantee of the equilibrium is but as a rotten pillar to a falling building ; from that time, this once beneficial opposition is converted into a cause of the general weakness, and (it cannot be concealed) of the general ruin. Though an alliance between Austria and Prussia continue to be as unnatural and impracticable as heretofore, yet it affords the only means of protection and defence to Germany ; there is no other chance of its preservation in the general wreck of Europe. This alone is a strong proof of the malignancy and danger of the present political crisis, and of the magnitude of our misfortunes : for as the means of preserving the last remains of the political system, are difficult, extraordinary, and unnatural ; even so severe and extraordinary must be the shock which has disordered it.

It is among the most unfortunate peculiarities of this case, that every confederacy of the leading powers of Germany, though called for and cemented by the strongest necessity, must neces-

farily be conceived and executed in the spirit of a coalition, and not of an alliance. The fundamental contrariety in the principles and objects of their politics, will continue the same under any circumstances ; and must indeed return whenever the general balance is re-established, and the federal system secured upon its former basis. This union, therefore, can never be other than transient ; which is the whole secret, the perpetual and necessary cause of its weakness. Such would be the uncertainty of a combination of these heterogeneous parts, that the forced and unsteady alliance might be dissolved, and all its operations suspended in the most critical and decisive moment. It is a matter of doubt whether the separate resistance of each state, with all its necessary disadvantages, would not be preferable to such a coalition.

If, moreover, the inordinate ascendant of France were to create an alliance between Austria and Prussia, as the only means of resisting it, a general coalition would, in all political probability, be the consequence. For England and Russia would always take part with Austria or Prussia ; and in the present state of Europe, every power of the second and third order would be more or less concerned with them. Thus a league between Austria and Prussia may always be con-

sidered as a coalition of Europe. The want of such a one (all the politicians of Europe will not suppress this truth), the want of such a coalition against France will often be felt and acknowledged : but the conviction of its necessity will be accompanied by the just apprehension of its insufficiency. It would require a rare conjunction of great and extraordinary characters to organize, direct, and contain such a coalition, and to conduct it successfully to the object of its original destination. Experience has taught us this: the dreadful lesson is yet fresh in the memory of humbled Europe; and who now among the rulers of nations will venture to encounter a second ?

Thus far is certain at all events : the political system cannot but be extremely defective, when it contains such a disproportion of power as nothing but a general league can rectify. And when even that difficult, dangerous, and almost desperate remedy does not promise certain success, does not afford even rational hopes of it, the existence of any thing like equilibrium must be quite out of the question.

I will here briefly recapitulate the foregoing observations, and present the following results of this view of the present relations between France  
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and Europe ; which, though indeed only my individual opinion, is founded throughout upon facts.

1st. France has extended her limits on all sides by military or revolutionary operations. She has destroyed the independence of the neighbouring states, either by regular conquest, as in the case of Flanders, Savoy, the Rhine lands, &c. or under colour of alliance, as with Holland, Spain, Switzerland, and the Italian republics ; or finally, by the right of power only, as in the subjection of all Italy as far as the Adige. The ancient constitutions of all these countries have been demolished, and France has established an empire upon their ruins, which has no parallel in Europe.

2dly. This total obliteration of her former limits, this destruction of every safeguard of her neighbours ; this military force, alike extraordinary in extent and efficacy, and far exceeding even her territorial aggrandizement in proportion ; these have given a preponderance to France, against which no continental power, not even the greatest, can contend with any chance of success.

3dly. Were France to abuse this prodigious preponderance, and, not content with her present acquisitions, were she to prescribe too hard

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conditions

conditions to the rest of Europe, a general league would be the only means of resisting the danger.

4thly. Such is the geographical, military, and political situation of France, that no league against her could be in the least effectual, in which Austria or Prussia, or both, are not engaged.

5thly. In every future war of Austria or Prussia separately against France, the probability of victory (to say no more) is on the side of the latter : and even the alliance of either with a third state, would not form a counterpoise to France, if the other remained neuter ; they could, at the most, only lessen the disproportion \*.

6thly. Austria and Prussia must therefore act in concert, to afford a hope of effectual protection to Germany in any future war.

7thly. But an intimate alliance between those two powers, is the most improbable, the most difficult of all political combinations. Thus vanishes the basis of every federative guarantee against France, as soon as we have discovered it.

8thly. In the whole sphere of federal relations there is no alliance (in the common acceptation of the word) that can form a counterpoise to

\* Vide Note D.D.

France. This can only be accomplished by the means always dangerous and uncertain, of a coalition, whenever the necessity of an active resistance shall arise : and as every coalition against France must be general (because the whole of Germany, and consequently all the allies of the leading powers of the Empire must necessarily be engaged in it) ; so the only refuge that remains to Europe against France, is the most dangerous, the most uncertain, the most intricate and difficult of all political measures.

I am aware of some objections likely to be made to this reasoning in general (whose intrinsic consistency, I think, will hardly be impeached), and will answer them beforehand.

On the one hand, it will be said (such are the topics of consolation most frequently held forth), “ To what purpose are all these melancholy calculations ? What is the use of thus reckoning and balancing remote dangers against hypothetical remedies ? The speculations of politics are as hills of sand, whose shape and figure vary every instant with the winds of heaven. What assurance have we that a few years, nay, a few months, may not put an end to this preponderance of France, so frightfully described to us ? The genius of a few enterprising minds, the genius of  
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one man, raised that nation from the depth of ruin to its present greatness and stability. That which depends upon an uncertain life, must be itself uncertain. Even now, perhaps, while you are bewailing her ascendancy, France is sinking once more into an abyss of anarchy and confusion, or losing, in the hands of a weak and incapable government, that bold and energetic character, which has more contributed to destroy the balance of Europe than any essential advantages of her present geographical, military, and federative position. Even if this should not be the case, who will warrant that the springs of this colossal machine may not relax in consequence of their very nature; and even though managed by the most skilful artists, wear out and become useless in the course of time? Take from France her military spirit, discipline, and enthusiasm, (and where is it written that they must be eternal, because created in a moment by extraordinary circumstances?) and what becomes of her power? Her extent of territory, her conquests, her tributary republics, her immense population, will all be converted into a weight to hasten her downfall whenever the vital principle in the centre shall fail. And is then the rest of Europe for ever deprived of courage and genius, of great and energetic plans, and of ability to execute them? A single  
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extraordinary genius, one great and decided character, might reverse the whole system, and take from France the weight that now oppresses Europe, to throw it into an opposite scale. Perhaps in the midst of your complaints of its intolerable preponderance, the moment may unexpectedly arrive, when the French nation will be deprived of its just and beneficial influence; and you will have to lament, that, by an exaggerated description of the present danger, you have contributed to a loss so great and detrimental to the general interests."

To this I answer: Politics, speculative as well as practicable, have to do with no elements but such as actually exist; and when they look forward to the future, their calculations must always rest upon present realities, and not upon accidental or personal circumstances, upon empty hypotheses or mere possibilities. The probability of the long or short duration of the present state of France, her military and political ascendant, is a subject of speculation and reflection for the politician. But whatever the result (merely hypothetical and conditional) of his researches, it cannot affect the indisputable truth, that at present there is no prospect but of *power* to France and *danger* to the rest of Europe.

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Should France suddenly fall, or gradually decline, we would draw new conclusions from new premises ; should she, however improbable it may appear, descend even beneath her just level, and lose her proper and necessary share of power—the principle of her preservation ; should the safety of Europe be threatened from some other side with dangers now hardly to be understood or imagined ; those who survive such changes would learn how to accommodate their systems, principles, doctrines, and, where it is necessary to act, their measures accordingly. But so long as the present relations endure, all systems, principles, doctrines, and measures must be built upon these ; and as long as Europe on the one hand, and France on the other, continue as they now stand, in this first year of the nineteenth century, it must be permitted to assert, that there exists no federal constitution, no balance of power, no solid and durable peace.

On the other hand, I shall meet with objections of a different, and perhaps more specious nature. “ A revolution has been accomplished in the political system. This might have been prevented, and the former system preserved with all its defects, if the strength of Europe, more firmly united, had been more efficaciously directed. But the past cannot be undone ; the  
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present and the future only should occupy the science of politics. Why are they both represented so comfortless? There never existed a balance of power in the strict sense of the word; there always have been preponderating states: the weak have always been obnoxious to danger; there always have been pretexts for oppression, occasions for injustice, and subjects of war in Europe. Supposing the ascendancy acquired by France to be as you describe it, does it follow that all security, liberty, independence, and stability must be annihilated for ever in the rest of Europe? Will not France cease to be dangerous to other nations from the very circumstance of her having nothing more to wish for, nothing more to undertake? What is there now to call forth her exertions? Every new conquest would be a burden to the republic; every new conquest would diminish her strength. Will she go forth upon unprofitable adventures beyond the Alps, the Rhine, and the Pyrennees? Or, will she exterminate kingdoms which she cannot govern? The mere possibility of an abuse of power, of a wanton exaggeration of pretensions, will not justify suppositions of so hateful a nature, such unfounded and chimerical apprehensions. If the former revolutionary governments were the terror of Europe by their unprincipled ambition, their insatiable avarice,

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their unbounded immorality ; yet the present government is formed, in every respect, to dissipate the storm, to tranquillize all minds, and to awaken sentiments of confidence and security in all other nations. It aims at no farther aggrandizement ; seeks only to maintain its possessions as it found them, and is desirous of living in peace with its neighbours and the whole world ; faithful to the principles of the law of nations, a powerful protector of its allies, and an example of justice, equity, and moderation to its enemies. If it continues to adhere to such principles, why should not Europe be happy and secure in her present situation ? Let us forget the past ; let every state conform with prudent resignation to its present circumstances ; let each improve its present advantages, and renounce all destructive ambition, all unnatural and extravagant systems, all false and turbulent politics. The great powers of Europe, whose broad and solid foundations resisted the torrent of the revolution, are still powerful enough to defy every wanton attack, to cultivate and improve their states by peaceful economy, to make their subjects happy, and to maintain their political dignity. The rest is all error and illusion ; whether a certain number of little sovereigns, or one great republican power, give laws beyond the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Adige,

Adige, must be matter of indifference to the rest of Europe, since the ancient possessors are expelled, and the former constitutions abolished. Austria, Prussia, Russia, England, and the powers of a second and third order, and every thing that yet remains of the former system, will not the less prosper and endure on that account: and if these changes have indeed irreparably subverted the ancient federal system, what shall prevent you from erecting a new edifice with new materials?"

The following observations will answer these arguments; the strongest which any advocate for the present state of Europe, any defender of the ascendancy of France, can oppose to the just apprehensions of the world, and reasonable warnings of political speculation.

1st. Whether the present government of France deserve the unlimited confidence required by its partisans, is not within the sphere of my present inquiry. I once more solemnly disclaim all regard to personal consideration. I even go farther, and willingly concede whatever is not immediately necessary to my object, that I may thereby tread firmer upon the grounds where I mean to build conviction. I therefore entirely renounce all arguments deducible

ducible from the character of the present government; which shall be supposed in all its principles, opinions, plans, and measures, the reverse of that which it succeeded. We will consider it as only desirous of concord and peace, of security and justice; as hitherto guiltless of any proceeding calculated to justify our former apprehensions, or to excite new ones, to inspire mistrust, or to suppress reviving hopes: to grant this is surely the extreme of moderation.

2dly. But the character of the present French government is no security for the future. It is a leading maxim in every rational system of practicable politics, that every power is dangerous to the rest, which possesses the means of disturbing the general peace, and wants nothing but the will to use them. If we depart from this maxim, we no longer find any fixed point whatever in the whole sphere of politics; there remains nothing then but vague suppositions and wavering hypotheses, uncertain opinions of personal characters, and loose probabilities, which one moment presents, and the following destroys.

3dly. As the personal character of the present government of France, or indeed of any government

government whatever, cannot ensure the dispositions of its successors ; as even the present wishes, acts, and declarations of a sovereign, are no security for his intentions and proceedings at a future period ; even so do the obvious interests of a power afford no perfect assurance of its views and conduct. This observation must, however, only be taken in a limited sense. In the ordinary course of things the true interests of a nation are no inadequate criterion of the conduct which in all reasonable probability we are to expect from it, while there is a due balance of power, or a constitution in which it is nearly balanced ; when there is no danger of an immediate revolution, and no state sufficiently preponderant to effect a sudden subversion of the whole system. For it may always be supposed, that in any given period, as of fifty or an hundred years, the wise and imprudent counsels by which it is directed, will at least counterbalance each other ; that the principles of its real welfare, though for a time forgotten, will always be recurred to ; and that, on the whole, its true interest will be the leading object of the government. The politician will therefore generally be right in his conclusions, who makes the interest of each state a principal ground of every speculation concerning its future conduct \*. But

\* Vide Note E E.



this maxim ceases to be useful in times when the state of Europe may be altered in a moment by a single resolution. When any power attains so great a degree of influence and preponderance in the political system, that the slightest deviations of its politics may endanger all existing relations, and threaten a general subversion; it would be madness to dismiss every apprehension, and continue in perfect security, because war and conquest may be opposite to the permanent interests of that nation. For who will venture to assure us, that the men intrusted with this extraordinary power, will never give way to the impulse of ambition, avarice, or resentment, and gratify the passions of the moment, regardless of those permanent interests? This would be sufficient, in the present state of Europe, to produce the most extensive desolation.

4thly. When we consider the present state of France, and what she has experienced during the last ten years, we shall find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to determine what maxims and conduct her interests will constantly prescribe to her. Self-preservation is naturally the first object of every government. Where that is best secured by pacific measures, and an adherence to the principles of moderation and justice, there justice and moderation will prevail.

vail. But when circumstances require a contrary conduct, and a government feels itself obliged to assume a lofty and decided tone, and engage in great and splendid undertakings, to support its sinking popularity, to counteract an aspiring faction, or to awe the turbulence of a seditious people; then moderation is sacrificed to the interests of the moment; and who will be found bold enough to deny that the French government may possibly be thus circumstanced? Does not every thing about that government indicate the probability of critical situations, frequent changes, and a long state of uncertainty?

But should the present and every future government of France invariably renounce all views of usurpation, and make moderation the leading principle of its politics; should its interests be constantly averse to wars of conquest, plunder, and oppression; and should these doubtful positions be verified in the most satisfactory manner; yet the relations between France and the rest of Europe would not therefore be less unequal, constrained, and dangerous. For, besides the disputes arising from ambition, avarice, or wanton provocations among nations; there are differences of another nature, which originate in the doubtfulness of  
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their rights, the insufficiency of their treaties, and the often unavoidable concurrence of their several interests. These disputes, and the wars, which, in extreme cases, are the only means of deciding them, will never cease to occur, while there are separate states, without a perfect system of public law among them. But these unavoidable wars must, in the present situation of Europe, be productive of the most dreadful misfortunes. The slightest misunderstanding about an undefined boundary, a doubtful right of sovereignty or navigation (not to mention the greater ones, that might in time arise by the decease of princes about the right of succession), the slightest difference between France and any neighbouring state, would, on account of the immense preponderance of the French power, raise such a storm as to threaten all Europe with destruction. The dictates of sound policy prescribe the necessity of a natural or artificial balance of power; not only to prevent the wanton and dangerous abuse of it on the part of a preponderating state; but even to maintain a due proportion of strength in those ordinary wars, which human wisdom is often unable to avert, and to preserve the political system from shocks that might prove fatal to its existence. Whenever this balance is destroyed, the security of the whole is immediately annihilated, whether the

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the maxims that govern each particular state be just or unjust, warlike or pacific.

6thly. In the present state of things, there is a constant source of political disturbance, a perpetual cause of war, in the necessary disposition of the humbled and oppressed nations, in their unextinguishable resentment towards their haughty and oppressive conqueror. It would betray the grossest ignorance of human nature to expect that nations, subdued and trampled on by France; that princes stripped of their provinces and revenues, their rank and splendour, and subjected to the most humiliating conditions; that so many minds afflicted by the severest losses, and irritated by the most contemptuous insults, should in a moment throw a veil of oblivion upon the past, forget their sufferings, dispel their sorrows, and submit, with patient resignation, to the yoke of France.— Every rational observer of the ordinary course of human sentiments and passions must expect the very reverse. Until the power of France shall again be reduced to its just proportion in the system of Europe, the prevailing sentiment in all other countries, or at least in the principal European states, will be a secret desire of thwarting her preponderance; a secret and insurmountable hatred of that monopoly of in-

fluence and dominion which France has so victoriously asserted. They will suffer in silence so long as they continue to feel the impossibility of any effectual remedy. But new exertions and attempts, new wars and coalitions, will be formed upon the first hope of a successful issue, whether founded upon reviving courage and the animating consciousness of their own increased strength, or upon symptoms of disorder, dissension, and weakness in the interior of France. An unnatural and oppressive constitution, incompatible with the safety and dignity of Europe in general, can have no prospect of duration. The indestructible elasticity of springs too forcibly compressed, will always tend to restore their natural state. All the treaties in the world cannot confirm and preserve a state of things repugnant to every principle of freedom, to all equality of power, to the fundamental laws of the social and federal constitution, to the wishes, propensities, and views of the great majority of nations and individuals\*.

7thly. Should any man deny the force or truth of all these arguments, and assert, in contradiction to experience, to the evidence of the past and present, and to the true principles

\* Vide Note F F.

of politics, that neither the mutability of the views and characters of the rulers of France, nor the uncertainty of their future dispositions, nor the chance of their private interests being incompatible with the general interest and peace of Europe, nor the danger with which even an ordinary war would threaten all Europe when there is no balance of power, nor the natural and insurmountable propensity to dissolve unnatural obligations—should he assert, that none of these causes of dissension, enmity, and war, are sufficiently active and important to justify the apprehensions here entertained; and that, notwithstanding all these obvious sources of perpetual internal discord, the constitution established by the French revolution, and the events of its unhappy war, may endure in peace and harmony, as well as the former or any other political combination; he must at least allow, that such a constitution does not deserve the appellation of a federative system, either in the former, or any other proper acceptation of the words. He must be prepared to assert, that the balance of power, as hitherto conceived, is only an empty term; that Europe can exist and prosper under circumstances different from those formerly held necessary and essential to it; and that federative policy is in future to proceed upon new and unheard-of principles, in utter

contradiction to all which prevailed before, and hitherto unconfirmed by any experience. According to all former grounds of judgment, all ancient rule of conduct in politics, the present situation of Europe is a state of political anarchy, of constant and unextinguishable war. Those who maintain the contrary, must either renounce all consistency, or disclaim every principle hitherto received.

These remarks on the present relations between France and Europe, are totally uninfluenced by hatred or prejudice against the French republic. They flow from a free and impartial consideration of the subject, from the real state and natural course of things, and from an unconstrained application of the simplest rules of the science of politics. Every enlightened friend of the French nation must as readily subscribe to them, as the bitterest enemy of France, or the most determined adversary of her present constitution: It is a characteristic property of all great disorders in the political system, that they do as much injury to the states apparently benefited by the destruction of the balance, as to the immediate losers by the disproportion introduced. It is the true and permanent interest of every nation without exception, to preserve a due proportion between its own strength, and that of its neighbours ; and  
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to maintain a just distribution of power among all the members of the federative system. The advantages of a dangerous ascendancy are always deceitful ; for the public welfare of a nation cannot be secure, without the satisfaction of its neighbours, and the confidence of the world. An enlightened policy requires a due attention to these important requisites of peace, on the part of the greatest as well as the smallest states. Were France to distinguish her true interests ; were the voice of reason to prevail above the dictates of ambition and avarice ; her statesmen would easily be convinced, that what now is called, by a shameless abuse of words, the federative system of Europe, is nothing but a compound of inordinate power on the one hand, and impotence on the other ; in which no real independence, no stability or security, and no permanent peace can exist ; and which is consequently incompatible with the general welfare.

I have freely declared my opinion of the present state of Europe. I have not suppressed the difficulties which I conceive inseparably connected with every attempt to establish a better system, amidst our present disasters—the fortune of the present, and perhaps the dowry of future generations. I have portrayed the evil at full length, such as I beheld it. It is for the practical politician



tician to find the most effectual remedies for the disorders of society ; the writer has done his duty when he has shown their existence and origin. In one case, however, he may go farther : if another writer, whether authorized or not, has made proposals to the public, he may inquire into and examine them. In one of the principal chapters of his work, the Author of *l'Etat de la France* has given us the basis of a new federal system ; for he does not doubt the destruction of the old one. This may therefore with propriety be made a subject of public discussion ; and I shall now proceed to examine it.

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## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Relations between France and her Allies.*

IT is the opinion of our Author that in future every political alliance should be founded on the two following rules :

1st, “ In peace it should guarantee the continuance of subsisting relations, and in war it should provide for the defence of those relations against the common enemy.” 2dly, “ It should secure the political interests of the continent both

in peace and war, against the immoderate ascendant of the maritime powers \*."

Sad indeed is the prospect for the federal system of Europe, if such principles are to be made the foundations of all future alliances. How can they answer that purpose, when they do not define any, much less all the conditions of an useful alliance? The slightest glance will convince us that these pretended general rules are perfectly futile either in practicable or speculative politics.

1st. "That every alliance should guarantee the continuance of existing relations in peace, and provide for their defence in war," is (if it be not mere tautology) nothing more than a verbal enunciation of the general object of all alliances, by no means a rule whereby the science of politics can form or approve any particular engagement. Every alliance is doubtless intended somehow to maintain subsisting relations: but what relations ought to be the objects of such conventions? that is the question. The vague and undefined positions of the Author are far from ascertaining this point; and indeed only serve to divert our attention from every inquiry leading to an explanation of it. His principles would induce us to conclude that the *nature* of the rela-

\* Vide Note G G.

tions subsisting, is a matter of no consideration ; that nothing more is requisite than to provide for their *duration*. But sound policy will not resort to means of preserving and perpetuating them, till it has first examined if they be worth preserving. It would indeed be a fit maxim for a power giving laws to all Europe, that only such alliances should be reckoned just and useful, as afforded fresh guarantees and new instruments of its own tyranny. But when we speak of general principles, we must take a more liberal view of the subject ; which would lead to the conclusion, that when the existing relations are clearly detrimental to the welfare of Europe, or to the independence and security of any nation, the most wise and beneficial alliance would be that which had for its object the *gradual dissolution* of those relations, and not their preservation.

2dly. “ *The inordinate ascendancy of the maritime powers,*” is a form of words without meaning ; and so little worthy to be made a leading principle in politics, that it will not even stand the test of common logic. An idea merely relative, can never be the groundwork of an absolute rule. Every attempt to lay down such a rule, with such materials, must naturally induce the suspicion, that the Author wants to conceal unjustifiable views beneath these vague expressions,  
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and to pass his own will and pleasure for law. It would, besides, be an extraordinary principle, that every league of the continental powers should be directed against the preponderance of the maritime states. Before we speak of the exaggerated ascendancy of those states, and of alliances to be formed to oppose it, we ought to ascertain exactly, how far their just, and necessary, and beneficial influence in the affairs of the continent, and on the whole political system, should extend. This is a question of considerable importance ; and, till this has been completely determined, we cannot think of providing against the excess of that, which nothing but the blindest partiality could condemn as altogether prejudicial.

In the place of these arbitrary assumptions, whose absurdity and insufficiency, when treated as general rules, must be obvious to the most superficial examination, I think I may place the following maxim, which is certainly more clear and comprehensive, even if it should not completely exhaust the subject.

A nation ought, in its alliances, to consider its true and permanent interests (distinguished from the mutable dispositions, the temporary inclinations and aversions of its rulers) and, at the same

same time, to keep in view, as much as possible, the maintenance of that general balance, which will always most conduce to the true and permanent interest of each particular state. It is the business of practical politics to determine how these interests may, at different periods, be best ascertained, and what plans or combinations are best adapted to that end : no general principle can furnish the solution of such problems.

The above maxim, if it be not entirely destitute of truth, will lead to the following important, though melancholy conclusion. Every great disorder, introduced into the federal system, by the inordinate ascendant of one of its constituent parts, not only destroys the balance of the whole, but throws such difficulties in the way of future useful alliances, as to render the formation of such, next to impossible. The connexion between this position, and what I have laid down as the leading principle of alliances, may, I think, be sufficiently demonstrated.

1st. Let us suppose some nation to have obtained an absolute preponderance ; that nation cannot enter into any alliance whatever, consistently either with the interests of the remaining powers, or its own. With regard to the interests  
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of the rest : if it should engage in alliance with one of the more powerful, the preponderance so much dreaded would be thereby increased; the insecurity of the other nations would be rendered greater, and the general disorder more desperate ; and even the situation of its temporary ally would necessarily be more precarious than ever. But were it to form a connexion with a feeble state, then, in addition to the above evils, the entire subjection of the pretended ally, and the total annihilation of its independence, would be the immediate consequences. With respect to the interests of the preponderating state itself, every such alliance must be prejudicial, because it contributes to support and preserve a system, which cannot, from its nature, be of long duration ; and which, even while it lasts, is productive of no real and solid good, no true and essential advantage to the very power whose pride it gratifies. There is, moreover, something unnatural and repugnant in the idea of an alliance of any nation, great or small, with a power whose preponderance is the perpetual object of the solicitude, the plans, and vigilance of the rest ; whose ascendancy (were it governed by angels) must render it the common enemy of all security and independence ; and whose friendship is often more dangerous than even its enmity.

adly. It is equally difficult to conceive how, when one nation has acquired an exclusive preponderance, any beneficial alliance can be formed among the rest. This, though it may perhaps appear paradoxical, may, I think, be explained in a very satisfactory manner. In such a state of things as I am here supposing, every alliance must be directly or indirectly opposed to the preponderating power; for it would be no less impolitic than ungenerous, to act against any of the weaker nations. Every such confederacy against the predominant state, must either be composed of a part of the rest, or by the whole. In the former case it is evident, that those who are not included in it, will necessarily be impelled to draw nearer to the common enemy, either by avowed alliances, or by a system of neutrality not very different; and thus will a partial confederacy naturally tend to render things worse. In the latter case (and it likewise might very probably happen in the former), the alliance is converted into a coalition, with all the attendant difficulties and dangerous peculiarities of such a league; and the permanent interests of the several powers are sacrificed to a temporary object, of which, unfortunately, the attainment is always extremely doubtful.

I might adduce a great number of examples from past times, and advance many conjectures  
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with respect to the future, to render this reasoning more clear and impressive ; but I leave all that to the judgment and penetration of the attentive reader. There are certain political truths of so comfortable a nature, certain relations so critical, that they will not bear to be treated but in a very general manner.

It will be easy, after these observations, to appreciate the nature of the present relations between France and her allies ; and to judge how far we may expect from them the re-establishment of the subverted system of Europe. The Author of the *Etat de la France* has dignified the alliances of the French republic with Spain, Holland, and Genoa, by calling them the first foundations of a future federal edifice\*. He quotes them as honourable and irresistible proofs of the generosity and disinterestedness of the republic, as assurances of the uprightness of her principles, and as the productions of an almost wonderful political wisdom.

\* Neither Switzerland nor the Cisalpine republic are mentioned in this scheme of the future federal system of France. What can be the reason of the omission ? They are as much the faithful allies of the French republic as those the Author has specified : they maintain French armies, submit to the guardianship of the great nation, guaranty the subsisting relations, &c.



I should be very justly censured, were I formally to analyze these panegyrics. The Author was no less acquainted than any of his readers, with the real nature of the connexions of France with Spain, Holland, &c. and if he truly and conscientiously considered as alliances the relations existing between the French republic and the nations honoured with the vague and equivocal title of her allies; his conception of an alliance must be very different from all hitherto received notions. Such were the alliances (though the terms were certainly more favourable) of Sicily, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt, &c. with the Romans! If the future alliances of France are to be formed on these models; if the present condition of Switzerland and Holland, Italy and Spain, awaits all those to be hereafter leagued with the French government; it may well indeed be asked, whether the friendship and protection of that power are less fatal than her declared enmity. If these relations, formed and maintained by force of arms, are to be the basis of a new federal system, and a future law of nations, Europe must ardently wish that the superstructure to be raised upon such a foundation may never be completed\*.

This wish becomes still more earnest, when we learn the principles on which this new system

\* Vide Note H H.

of French alliances is to be raised and propagated. The declaration of our Author on that head (and his authority for the explanation and defence of those principles is surely not to be rejected) is no less instructive than alarming. "If France," says he, "cannot extend her federal system on the continent in any other way, she will employ the only means left her by the blindness and obstinacy of nations which, refusing her alliance, will persist in the continuance of a destructive war : for political conventions she will substitute military treaties : and if princes continue deaf to the voice of their own interests, which require amity with France, she will forcibly enter into alliance with the countries they are unable to defend ; and, covering their territories with her armies, will use their resources as her own."

This clear, undisguised, and unequivocal declaration, is the best comment on the theory of French alliances. Thus have they hitherto been formed, and thus will it be with all succeeding ones. Such must and will continue to be the system of politics, when the ascendancy of one nation has destroyed the security of all ; when, deprived of every federative safeguard, the weak are reduced to utter helplessness, and the law of nations is supplanted by the law of force.

Ere we discuss the political conduct of France towards her allies, we must at least wait till she has allies. Those who are now honoured with that appellation, are, at best, only her clients. It will be time to speak of the alliances of France in the true sense of the word, when she shall be connected upon free and equal terms, with one of the greater powers of Europe ; one of those which have hitherto maintained their independence. But in the present state of things, may the guardian angel of Europe avert such an event ! An alliance of France, preponderant as she now is, with any of the principal powers, would lead to incalculable mischief, would probably be the signal for endless misfortunes.

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### C H A P. III.

#### *Of France and her Enemies.*

**T**HE Author of the *Etat de la France* opens the consideration of this subject with a string of inviting assurances and brilliant promises, respecting the principles, the spirit, and the object of the present politics of France. “ France has and knows no natural enemy. France never desires the ruin of those she fights against.”--“ France only

only makes war to dissolve alliances incompatible with the tranquillity of Europe. France requires no extension of her federal relations to ensure her own security. She will be induced to form new engagements by charity alone towards such as want her assistance. Any nation injured by an alteration in the balance of Europe, threatened by an ambitious neighbour, oppressed by an intolerable yoke, or in want of a powerful support, will find the French government ready to adopt it among the objects of its federative policy."

I shall adhere to my original plan, and omit all animadversions on these assurances, so far as they are connected with the personal characters and opinions, the wishes and principles of the rulers of France. Whether these, totally uninfluenced by passion or interest, employ all their efforts, and direct all their views to ensure the general security of all nations, and the common welfare of Europe, I leave entirely unexamined. I confine myself to the following observations, which are founded on past facts, present undeniable truths, and views of the future, deduced from positive relations, independent of personal opinion and inclinations; and which are agreeable to the nature of things, the only fixed and certain clue to rational politics.

1. “ *France has no natural enemy ; she recognises none.*”—It is true indeed that the science of politics, in the social constitution to be established among nations, admits not national antipathies among the number of their relations. But the application of this theory to the actual state of society, is unfortunately as limited as that of the pure moral law, to the actions of individuals. Little as this last is able to suppress all anti-social inclinations and propensities in the mind of man, so little can the former maintain a system perfectly conformable to the law of nations, and adapted to the general welfare : which often inevitably encounters private interests, national prejudices, and national passions. There do exist natural enmities between nations, though a more exalted policy may refuse to acknowledge them. I say nothing here of mere popular antipathies ; though even these, if traced to their origin, will seldom be found destitute of some reasonable foundation. I mean by natural enmity, the relation between two states, whose geographical, political, or military situations, or some object common to their industry or desires, though not equally attainable to both, induce a state of continual jealousy, and, consequently, of continual, more or less active opposition.

Such was the relation formerly subsisting between Rome and Carthage ; two nations, whose  
irrecon-

irreconcilable enmity, so conspicuous in history, presents an instructive lesson to mankind. In the same relation towards each other have France and England stood since the beginning of the seventeenth century; from the moment when a large portion of the industry, the power and the glory of both, began to be founded upon an extensive commerce; when the policy and ambition of both began to be principally directed towards remote settlements and colonial monopoly, and to a powerful marine, as the necessary means of securing these advantages; and when each became the centre of a distinct federal combination, and struggled with its rival for the first place in the general system of Europe. All these natural sources of perpetual opposition have continued, under different appearances, and with various results, until the present day; they will still continue to exist, and to produce the same effects; and, though we may hope that wisdom and prudence will moderate their fatal influence, and avert from ourselves and posterity the shocking tragedy of an internecine war; yet this deep-rooted and extensive rivalry must be taken into the account, in every political reasoning, as one of its constant and most important elements.

While this is a truth which cannot be denied, it is, on the other hand, equally certain, that France, before the revolution, stood towards no

continental power whatever, in the unfortunate relation of a natural enemy. I have endeavoured above to explain the causes of this. The revolution had, indeed, powerfully and visibly suspended the operation of those causes; but they would by no means have ceased entirely, if the new political system of France had borne even the smallest resemblance to the old. The revolution could not but fill Europe with apprehensions of the most alarming nature, and inspire all that surrounded France, whether friends or enemies, with fear, resentment, or disgust. But had the federal constitution of Europe been replaced on its former footing, at the close of that revolution; had the French nation recurred to its former limits; and had the balance of political and military power been restored; whatever might have been the final result of her internal convulsions, the relations of peace and amity, formerly subsisting between France and all the continental powers, would, in some way or other, have been re-established. Is that now to be hoped or expected? All Europe bleeds at the wounds inflicted by the aggrandizement of France; and her dreadful preponderance still threatens, like an impending storm ready to burst over the heads of a trembling world. Do we here find (let the admirers of France answer the question), do we here find the materials for a system of peace, of

mutual confidence, and security ? Does this constrained relation present the prospect of a happy renewal and confirmation of the bonds of federal union ? Is not the whole system of Europe, so long as it may yet endure, forced, on the contrary, to maintain an armed and constant opposition to France ? And does not such an armed opposition, in many essential respects, resemble a state of perpetual war ?

The truth therefore is, that France, who before the revolution had no natural and permanent enemy on the continent, is now (in a certain sense of the word) surrounded by nothing but enemies. She may, relying on her great power, continue to despise these enemies ; she may even, by moderation and equity in her proceedings, disarm their mistrust for a time ; finally, by the coincidence of temporary interests, she may, perhaps, obtain the alliance of one or other of them. But all this does not invalidate the grounds of my assertion : I still hold by what is permanent and essential in the political system ; and to the assertion that France can now acknowledge no natural enemy, I oppose one, which is certainly more conformable to reason and experience ; that, in the common course of things, a nation situated as France now is, *cannot reckon upon any natural friend.*

2. “ *France*



2. "*France never desires the ruin of those she fights against.*"—What she now does, or may hereafter desire, will only be shown by future experience: a bare assertion, whatever be its authority, is no sufficient security. But what she hitherto has pursued and accomplished, is open to discussion; for it has now become historical fact, and, consequently, subject for investigation. The Author even calls upon his contemporaries to devote themselves to this examination. He asserts (and many of his readers have found the assertion no less true than ingenious) that it is not the conquests of a nation, but the treaties which she proposes, or to which she submits, that display the views she entertains, and show the measure of her moderation and forbearance, or of her insatiable avarice and injustice\*. I too will allow the truth of this proposition, with some restrictions; but I really cannot conceive what will be thereby gained for the friends of the French government. For I think it will not be very easy to show, that France has hitherto manifested any extraordinary degree of magnanimity in her treaties of peace. The Author of the *Etat de la France* has unhappily adduced the treaty of Campo Formio as an instance of it. He forgot that now, when a part of the veil which covered the negotiations of Leoben and

\* Vide Note I I.

Udine, on the one hand, and the proceedings of the Directory on the other, has been withdrawn, there is scarcely a diplomatic tyro in Europe unacquainted with the true causes of the then pretended moderation of France. He forgot, besides, that the ever memorable congress of Rastadt was the true commentary, the after-piece, the *finale* of the treaty of Campo Formio ! We may now apply his principle to another and more recent example, an example, in many respects, more interesting, decisive, and instructive, than that treaty which now only exists in the page of history : we have now got the treaty of LUNEVILLE.

I am far from intending to censure the French, or any other government, for taking advantage of its successes at the conclusion of a victorious campaign, and regulating the conditions of peace according to the events of the war. This can never be a subject of reproach to her. But if her moderation is to be extolled, to be represented as a source of consolation for the suffering party, as a happy counterbalance to her power, and, as it were, an antidote to her fortune and victories (which in the public discussions of the treaty of Luneville has more than once been said) ; it should first be shown, that there is an obvious difference between what she has, and what she might have insisted upon ; what she could have  
required

required consistently with her own interests : but I look in vain for this in the history of the treaty of Luneville.

It is thought surprising, that in this treaty France *only* made the Rhine the extent of her limits. But is she then expected to extend her already immense territory beyond all possibility of governing it ? Is there not always a point beyond which the aggrandizement of a nation becomes an immediate cause of its weakness ? Had not France long since attained that point ? And when we speak of plans of conquest and dominion in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, are they to be supposed like those of an Alexander or a Gengis Khan ? The idea of an universal monarchy has lost its former meaning ; the business of government is become so much more difficult and intricate, that the most extravagant ambition will limit what it desires to rule ; and when in our days a nation is said to give laws to Europe, it is understood to do it indirectly and not immediately. As soon as we consider the treaty of Luneville in this light, we see that France obtained by it every thing that any treaty of peace could have secured to her. She fixed her own limits, that is, the limits of her immediate active government ; not those of her political, military, and (to apply an old term

term to a new relation) feudal seigniory. The treaty left Holland, and Switzerland, and Italy, from the Alps to Malta, in the hands of the French government; it left her, tacitly or explicitly, the power of disposing at her pleasure of the future fate of those countries. It destroyed the few fortified places which Germany might yet consider a bulwark against France in any future war; and once for all, laid bare the richest provinces of Germany to the first irruption of a French army. Even in the internal distribution of power, in the equalization of the states, in the new political organization of the Empire, France reserved to herself the right of deciding. I cannot conceive any essential advantage that France could have sought for or desired in the present treaty more than she acquired; and if any European power at the close of the eighteenth century was desirous of forming a rational and practicable plan of universal dominion, there would hardly be found a more suitable foundation for it than this treaty.

If by the ruin of a state is to be understood the destruction of its independence, it would be mockery to assert, that France has sought the preservation of the nations with whom she has been at war. For the result, the final and undeniable

niable result, of this unexampled war is, that at the present moment there no longer exist any independent nations, except some of the principal states. If then the moderation of France is to be one of her merits, and an object of praise and admiration, it must first be proved that France had it in her power to subject these leading powers to the same fate that all the smaller ones experienced ; and this, happily, might not be quite so easily proved.

3. “ *France makes war for the purpose of dissolving alliances hostile to the peace of Europe.*”—That object has been completely attained. Every alliance against France, with one exception only, is now destroyed. I will not here again inquire, whether the peace of Europe would thereby have suffered if these alliances had been more firmly cemented, and, consequently, more successful. Experience presents a melancholy account of what the peace of Europe has hitherto gained by their dissolution ; we wait with patient resignation for the advantages henceforward to be derived from it. The meaning of the French maxim is at all events sufficiently evident : “ There shall, in future, no league whatever be formed, till’ France shall have pronounced it lawful and good.”—This is the fundamental law of the new federal constitution of Europe. If  
this

this rule be adopted, there will no longer be any opposition to France : war is the punishment for those who transgress it ; and this melancholy alternative closes every prospect of the future.

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After announcing these general principles, the author of the *Etat de la France* proceeds to examine the several relations between France and the powers at war with her when his work was published. The number of these has since then been considerably diminished ; for England, feebly supported by the Porte, is now the only power in arms against France. The other confederates in the last European league have all of them, either tacitly or formally, retired from a fruitless contest.

There was a period when Russia, the late most decided enemy of France, seemed disposed not only to be at peace with that triumphant power, but even to form a close alliance, and act in concert with it. It was natural and consistent that the French government should use all its efforts to accomplish this singular metamorphosis ; and that the partisans of that government should exhaust their eloquence and ingenuity to prove to the Russian monarch how infinite

nite the glory and advantage he was to derive from his new connexion. But that they should expect to gain the assent of the rest of Europe to their new doctrine, and to persuade all other nations that this monstrous alliance was to be a source of security, liberty, and prosperity to them ; this required a degree of assurance on the one hand, and of credulity on the other, almost surpassing all conception. I will not here inquire, whether the true interests of Russia can ever induce its government to form an alliance with France (which can hardly be conceived possible, unless its ancient relations with England be entirely given up) ; I am speaking of the interests of Europe, and of the politics of each nation with respect to the whole. In which view of the subject, I assert, upon the firmest conviction, that an alliance between Russia and France, such as was some months ago, and surely not without reason, apprehended, would be the most dangerous, the most fatal of all political combinations ; that if in the politics of Europe there yet remained any sense of dignity, of interest, and of duty, every nerve would be strained, and every power employed to counteract this last and most formidable evil ; and that if ever it should be realized, the moment of its formation would be the last of all independence, all security in Europe, all peace but peace eternal ! Happily for the general  
welfare,

welfare, the idea of this unnatural alliance could only be conceived in a very uncommon mind; and whatever may be the future policy of the present sovereign of Russia, it is to be hoped all danger of the renewal of that colossal project has for ever ceased to be an object of political speculation.

The Author speaks in vague and obscure terms of the relations between France and Turkey; the ambiguity of his expressions bespeaks the undecided plans of his government with respect to the affairs of the Porte. He is uncertain whether the Ottoman Porte is to receive new life from the patronage of the French republic, or whether it is to be destroyed for ever; he prepares us for either of these two events. We will examine no farther into them at present. The important changes which Europe may expect on that side, and which may perhaps once more shake it to its foundations, belong entirely to futurity; the present moment is so overloaded with present misfortunes and pressing dangers, that it would be unwise to anticipate those to come: let the men who will sooner or later be called upon to deprecate or to bear those new storms, employ their skill and efforts with zeal and fidelity when the hour shall arrive.



I shall equally avoid a minute analysis of the present relations between France and Austria. The treaty of Luneville has displayed to the world the final result of the war between them. I have already made some observations in the preceding chapters, on the future policy of Austria, as it stands connected with the federal constitution of Europe ; every thing beyond that is out of my sphere.

But the political and commercial system of England, and its relations with the other powers, are necessarily connected with the main object of the present investigation. To any person who has in the least studied the character of the book I am now answering ; to any one, even superficially, acquainted with the principles and views of the Author, it must have been obvious, that as his first object was to draw a flattering picture of the new political system of France, his next was to portray that of England in the most odious colours. On more than one occasion, indeed, he even gives reason to suspect that this last was the chief part of his design. Thus we find all his pretended general reasonings and speculations on the interests of Europe applying at last exclusively to England. Even his vindication of the French government, and his encomiums on their principles and conduct, are in the  
shape

shape of invective and reproach against the ministry of their rivals. And his brilliant promises of all the blessings to be diffused by France over Europe, are confounded with his complaints of the insufferable tyranny exercised by Great Britain.

In the examination of the *Etat de la France*, it is therefore necessary to enter as fully as possible into the relations between England and the rest of Europe. This investigation is of itself one of the most important in the sphere of speculative politics. The Author does not merely speak his own opinion, even in his severest accusations; he is the echo of the times. He represents the prevailing sentiments and opinions, the uniform bias of a great multitude of politicians in all countries; and though he may perhaps have made some peculiar additions to the favourite topic of the day; though he may have treated the subject with more than common ingenuity and more than common bitterness; yet he has on the whole been faithful to the views, the argumentation, and the source whence almost all political wisdom and eloquence has, of late years, been derived whenever England was the subject of discussion.

I have already considered, at some length, what England has hitherto been in a political

sense ; and what she must necessarily continue to be, on account of her situation with regard to Europe in general, and her relations to France in particular. But we now come to another altogether different point of view, the favourite topic of many, whose honest belief, or passion, or interest, are perpetually filling the world with alarm and dread of the ascendancy of England. This, in contradistinction to the other, may be called the *domestic policy* of Great Britain ; which I am now going to examine, in order to determine whether its effects, when impartially considered, are different from those of her general politics. If the prevailing opinion on this subject be consonant with truth, the industry of Great Britain is for ever at variance with the industry of all Europe : England is only enriched by impoverishing other nations ; and her amazing power is merely the consequence of the utter helplessness, or, as others term it, the absolute slavery in which she keeps them all. If this opinion is well founded, the British empire must be seen in a very peculiar light. It would then necessarily be, even in peace, a perpetual enemy to the independence and happiness of all countries ; and in war, nothing short of the tyrant and terror of Europe. Then, indeed, whatever might otherwise be truly said of its political utility would lose

lose all weight. For though the peculiar resources of England might be a safeguard against the destructive attempts of other powers, such casual benefit would be too dearly purchased by a perpetuity of intolerable evil. These accusations must therefore be completely investigated before we can pronounce definitively upon the relations of England to the rest of Europe. Till the falsehood of these charges be demonstrated, we cannot with confidence assert, that England has a just title to that place in the political system, which in many important respects can never be denied to her.

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#### CHAP. IV.

*An Inquiry into the principal Causes of Complaint  
against the commercial Tyranny of the English.*

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* has specified the following charges of accusation against England, which comprehend, if I mistake not, all that has been, or can hereafter be said, against the maritime and commercial superiority of Great Britain.

1st. "The celebrated Navigation Act laid the first foundation of the oppressive preponderance of the navy and commerce of the English. This unjust and hostile regulation induced a state of perpetual warfare between the industry of the British and that of every other nation."

2dly. "England has contended for colonies, factories, commercial establishments, or exclusive privileges in every part of the world; and has actually acquired, to the prejudice of all other nations, the unbounded and exclusive enjoyment of every branch of industry, every source of riches, and every valuable possession, whether territorial or commercial, in the inhabited or uninhabited regions of the globe."

3dly. "By this activity, and the immense monopoly of the sale of her productions, she has suppressed or fettered the industry of all the countries in Europe; she has retarded their progress, imposed the most oppressive of all tributes upon them, tyrannically deprived them of a most valuable right—the free exercise of their powers; and at length established a political tyranny, as the natural consequence of her mercantile and pecuniary sway."

4thly.

4thly. " She has framed a new code of maritime laws, peculiar to herself, and rejected by every other nation ; has introduced the use of it by main force, on all seas ; and thus in all her wars has persecuted, impeded, or totally annihilated the commerce of every power that refused to engage in it on her side."

In the present chapter, I have only to do with the three first of these charges ; the fourth will find its proper place in the next Part of this work, in which the relations of neutral powers will be discussed.

### I. *The Act of Navigation.*

The Author of the *Etat de la France* has advanced such observations on this Act, as clearly show how necessary it is to explain its contents and meaning before any attempt is made to reason upon its character and consequences. For, if this statute, so celebrated in the history of political economy, were as well known on the continent as from its nature it ought to be, surely no writer would have ventured to call it " a permanent conspiracy against the industry of all nations."

The principal provisions of this act are as follow :—1st. No ship, except it be British property, commanded by a British captain, and having at least three fourths of its crew British, is permitted to trade with the British colonies or settlements, or on the coast of Great Britain.—2dly. No foreign vessel is allowed to bring any other goods to England, but such as are the produce of the country to which the owner, the captain, and at least three fourths of the crew of such ship shall belong.—3dly. The importation of certain articles of foreign merchandise is prohibited either in British or foreign ships.—4thly. No sea-fish, unless caught by British fishermen, and freighted on board British vessels, are allowed to be imported into England. This act was made in the year 1651, in Cromwell's Protectorate, and confirmed by Charles II. in 1660. In order to conceal nothing relating to the point in question, we must direct the attention of the enemies of this act to a circumstance they take no notice of. The Act of Navigation does not comprehend all the prohibitive laws of the British commercial code. A number of later statutes have, on the one hand, indirectly restricted the importation of many articles by heavy impositions; and on the other, have laid such duties on certain articles of exportation as to increase the difficulty of a return

turn freight to the foreign merchant, and thus immediately impede his operations.

In the first place, if we consider these laws with respect to the *right* of Great Britain to enact them, we surely shall not meet with the smallest doubt on that head ; there can be no rational objection to it whatever. Every government has an indisputable right to promote the internal industry of its people in what appears to it the safest and most effectual way ; provided it does not absolutely violate the privileges of other countries. No nation has a right to exact from another the unrestricted admission, or any admission at all, of her produce, ships, and merchants. These undeniable principles have been the foundation of all commercial regulations to the present day. All nations, without exception, have endeavoured to encourage or secure the chief branches of their industry by prohibitions, duties, impositions, and restrictions of every kind ; and although the most eminent writers on political economy and government have held different opinions as to the wisdom and efficacy of these restrictions, yet they have in no instance treated them as violations of the law of nations, as public offences, usurpations, and crimes. Nay, more ; the system that occasioned the prohibitive law, was not only adopted by every government in Europe, but was acted on, refined, and



and carried to the utmost extent that their respective situations, abilities, or necessities would allow. That they had not all of them their *navigation acts*, was no proof of magnanimity, or tender and conscientious regard for the interest and welfare of their neighbours: it was owing to circumstances, which rendered the thing impracticable for them; and perhaps to carelessness, weakness, and (in this instance fortunate) inconsistency. Look at the various prohibitive laws, by which foreign commerce is restricted in other countries. It is impossible not to allow, that many of them are as oppressive in their effects as the English Navigation Act; and they are almost all as harsh and selfish, and intolerant and unfriendly in their principles.

The indisputable right of every nation to promote its domestic industry, by every method which does not actually injure others, is, if possible, still further strengthened and confirmed, when the aids applied to its *industry* are at the same time useful, or perhaps absolutely necessary to its *security*. A country whose very existence requires the maintenance of a numerous army, is fully authorized to prevent its citizens, by severe laws, from entering into foreign service. A country that does not produce sufficient grain to secure its inhabitants from

from the dangers of famine, has an undeniable right to forbid the exportation of all corn by penal statutes. A country whose independence and security rests entirely upon a powerful navy, possesses the most indisputable right to restrict its commercial relations with other powers by such regulations as may be necessary to ensure that first object of all government and legislation. This last was the case of England: her security depends upon her navy: a powerful navy cannot be formed without an extensive navigation; to create an extensive navigation was therefore the first and necessary object of the British legislature. This is sufficient to show that the Navigation Act (a part of the domestic policy of Great Britain) cannot, upon any principle of truth and justice, be termed "a measure offensive to the interests of other nations," much less "a continual conspiracy against their rights."

But is this restrictive regulation altogether consistent with the principles of a wise, enlightened, and liberal policy? Were there not other and less odious methods of encouraging the industry of the English? And is not the Navigation Act, though perfectly justifiable in itself, though highly conducive to the private interests of England, is it not a subject of perpetual um-  
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brage

brage to other nations? These questions will lead to a more accurate knowledge of the real character of the British Navigation Act.

It is, generally speaking, true, that laws are prejudicial when they impede or restrict the natural course and free expansion of human industry; when they forcibly impel it into new channels, or direct it where it would not naturally have flowed; when they urge its progress at the expense of its freedom. The Navigation Act is a law of this nature. It compels the inhabitant of Great Britain to fetch the produce of foreign countries in his own vessels, or to remain entirely, or in a great measure, deprived of them. It obliges him, therefore, to devote a larger portion of labour and capital to foreign trade than he would have done in the natural course of things if other nations had participated without restriction in the importation. It positively forbids him to employ the industry of a foreigner, even when it might suit his interest better than his own. It prevents him from purchasing certain articles abroad cheaper than he can get them at home. It prevents him from making use of foreign shipping, even in those cases where the freight is cheaper than that of his countrymen, and where he would consequently import the goods at a lower price.

Considered

Considered upon the general principles of an enlightened political economy, the Navigation Act is no less condemnable than all other prohibitive statutes.

But circumstances sometimes render it the duty of a government to depart, in particular cases, from general principles of state economy, when a temporary, or perhaps a permanent interest, urges considerations of more importance than any of the common maxims of administration. It is to circumstances of this imperious nature that the English Navigation Act owes its being \*. In order to form a counterpoise to the powerful states of the continent, to protect her insular territory, and maintain her independence, England was obliged to use every effort to raise and support a powerful marine. The importance of the object justified even coercive laws: The Navigation Act is indirectly coercive in its nature and operation. The English were compelled to cultivate, with their own vessels, their own sailors, and their own capitals, many branches of foreign trade, which would otherwise have remained, partly or entirely, in the hands of strangers. This was a powerful stimulus to the commercial marine of Great Britain, which was thereby rendered a nursery for

\* Vide Note K K.

the navy, and an important instrument of the greatness and security of the state, more rapidly and more effectually, than if left to the natural course of things.

But let us not forget, that, according to the genuine principles of political economy, the Navigation Act, which secured these important objects, was far from being advantageous to the industry of the nation ; was, on the contrary, a restraint upon it. It was a sacrifice to which England willingly submitted, the better to establish her security and independence. In affairs of commerce, the true interest of every nation requires an extensive competition, and the unrestrained liberty of buying and selling to the greatest advantage afforded by its industry and situation. The Navigation Act infringed this liberty, and destroyed, or very much diminished, that competition. So far from being directly beneficial to the foreign trade of Great Britain, this law was, in fact, indirectly detrimental to it.

No person acquainted with the real principles of national wealth and industry, can ever regard the Navigation Act as the foundation of England's commercial greatness\*. It has been in spite of that act, and not by means of it, that her foreign commerce has acquired such a wonderful extent. Its extraordinary progress and increase

\* Vide Note L L.

must be very differently accounted for : it is not the creature of the Navigation Act. If such a law had been passed in any other country, destitute of the natural advantages, character, and resources of England, it would have been a signal for the immediate annihilation of commerce ; the suppression of all industry ; the destruction of every incentive to enterprise and activity.

Now, since the Navigation Act has produced none of the effects in England which have been ascribed to it in the declamations of angry jealousy, labouring to render odious the commercial industry of Great Britain ; we have only to examine in what manner and how far it has been detrimental to other nations. For though it be impossible, upon any ground, to dispute the right of the British government to enact such a law ; it might, nevertheless, in its consequences be oppressive to other nations. Without being a positive act of injustice, it might deserve the appellation of an unfair and hostile regulation ; it might be constantly inimical to the interests of all Europe.

There is only one species of commerce directly injured by the English Navigation Act, viz. the conveyance from one country to another of the produce and manufactures of different nations. This may properly be termed the *freight trade* ;  
and

and this was the great source of the astonishing riches of Holland. Holland was, in fact, the only nation immediately affected and injured by the Navigation Act. The Dutch and the very few other nations engaged in the carrying trade, were for ever deprived of the English market. The direct traffic between the different states of Europe, with the productions of their own toil, or their own industry, was not impeded by it ; and whatever restrictions even this may have been fettered with by other laws in England, and by the system of duties established there, they were only such as the spirit of mercantile policy had produced in every other country \*. The carrying nations alone had reason to complain of the Navigation Act ; all others ought to have been indifferent to it. But it was not in the nature of things, that even the former should be ruined by it : the act only excluded them from one country ; and the markets of the rest of Europe consoled and indemnified them for the loss. Experience has shewn, that neither Holland nor Hamburgh, nor any of the states engaged in the same trade, have been either ruined or materially injured by it.

\* If it secured to England the exclusive commerce of her own colonies, it did no more in that respect than the maritime statutes of France, Spain, and Holland, in favour of their respective colonial systems.

If

If every government in Europe (say the accusers of the Navigation Act) had enacted similar laws against all other nations, the whole would have suffered a severe loss in the total annihilation of the freight trade. This observation is extremely just; but the evil which it points to, could only be conceived and dreaded, upon one supposition, and that a very improbable one. All governments must either have entirely mistaken their obvious interests, or wantonly have sacrificed them to the mad desire of injuring their neighbours. For every monopolizing statute (this cannot be too often repeated) is in the first instance, and generally in the highest degree, pernicious to the country which has produced it. Such a law must always be improper, must be absurd and unjustifiable, where reasons of the highest importance do not urge the dangerous exception; and where, besides, the nation that adopts the measure is not possessed of such strength and resources in itself as are sufficient to support it. These two conditions are united in the case of England only\*: all other states wanted either sufficient reason for introducing such a law, or the means of putting it in execution; most of them possessed neither the one nor the other.

The result of the foregoing examination is, therefore,

\* Vide Note M M.



1st, That the British Navigation Act repressed the industry of other countries in one respect only—that of excluding the carrying nations from one of their principal markets; in every other, the commerce and industry of Europe remained unmolested by it.

2dly, That this law was no source of the commercial greatness and riches of England. It operated, on the contrary, like all monopolizing statutes, prejudicially to the industry of the nation; and the extraordinary prosperity at which its commerce has arrived, must be referred to other causes.

3dly, The Navigation Act was a wise regulation as far as it encouraged, though at the expense of the ordinary principles of political economy, a branch of national industry, which contributed to the security and independence of Great Britain. A good policy made it contribute indirectly to every source of the welfare and prosperity of the state.

4thly, That supposing the Navigation Act to have been unwise, it can never have deserved the title of unjust. For it is neither more nor less than a regulation of domestic policy, for which a nation is not answerable to other powers. But

since the wisdom of the act cannot, under the circumstances of England's situation, be called in question, every shadow of an argument against its justice, is, of course, done away.

5thly, In as much as the British legislature went even beyond the Navigation Act, in prohibitive commercial statutes, the imposition of heavy duties on foreign produce, and other schemes of mercantile policy; and as far as it fettered the industry of its own and other countries, without being sufficiently justified by more important motives, it proceeded upon blameworthy principles. But what government in Europe can reproach the British nation on that account? The same mercantile policy has prevailed in every country, without exception, even to the present day. But, since the principles of political economy have no where been so thoroughly developed; and so extensively practised as in England; the presumption is in favour of that country, that it has, more than any other\*, abandoned the confined maxims of narrow-minded trade; a presumption which has been confirmed by more than one example, especially in the last twenty years.

England's commercial statutes do therefore furnish no cause of complaint against the maritime

\* I say *more than any other*; for it must be confessed that even England has not risen altogether superior to them.

tyranny of that nation : if those complaints have any foundation, it must be sought for elsewhere.

## II. *Of the Monopoly of trans European Dominion.*

When the expansion of the human faculties, and the civil and social improvement of mankind, shall have attained the point towards which Europe has been gradually tending during the three last centuries ; all civilized nations must be impelled by the desire of establishing a permanent system of connexion with the remotest parts of the world. The love of luxury, and the thirst of knowledge, new wants, and new powers of industry, the dictates of reason, and the allurements of passion, combine to give an irresistible force to this propensity. What was originally only a spirit of adventure, is gradually converted into systematic activity ; what was at first superfluity, becomes habitual, regular, and necessary. The productions of the most distant regions become articles of daily necessity ; the sea, as well as the land, is covered by the human species ; and navigation, commerce, and colonization, are ranked with the more simple occupations of agriculture and domestic manufacture.

This unlimited progress of industry, this unbounded multiplication of its materials, its instruments, and its objects, is the destination of  
humanity.

humanity. Civilization is not to be the exclusive privilege of this or that favoured people ; it will spread over the whole habitable globe in the course of time. If we consider them with reference to this inestimable object—the settlements of Europeans in other quarters of the globe, are fortunate and glorious events, notwithstanding all the evils that accompanied them ; and if we lose sight of these consequences, all is enigma, doubt, and darkness. Why was every step of the civilized, among savage nations, to be marked by the most atrocious cruelties ? Why were millions to be destroyed, that a happier race might be established upon their graves ? Why were destructive wars, and robbery, and oppression, and intolerable slavery, made the groundwork and necessary condition of the noblest work of man ? Human reason is lost in these inexplicable contradictions ; between the grandeur and sublimity of the end, and the baseness and horribleness of the means.

Force and injustice were, however, with few exceptions, the groundwork of all European colonies and dominions in the rest of the world. Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch, English, and French, are, in this respect, all alike condemnable : no nation can reproach another. Nay,

more, no European has a right to reproach the commercial states, with the oppression of the original inhabitants of their foreign possessions. For every one participates in the manifold advantages thence derived to all Europe, which affect every branch of industry, and spread through every rank of society. No one will renounce his share of those advantages; and we are therefore all of us equally responsible for the evils attendant upon their cultivation, and, in a certain degree, for the crimes which accompanied the original settlements.

These no longer exist but in the page of history; the rapacious spirit of the first conquerors has every where yielded to more mild and humane dispositions. There is but one opinion among civilized nations concerning the necessity of continuing the present system, notwithstanding all the lamentations of philanthropy. We can therefore only hope that the wisdom of an enlightened age may gradually introduce among the numerous slaves of our true and imaginary wants, of our insatiable desires and restless activity, that happy state of being, which is alone consistent with the interest of all, and calculated to secure the reign of peace and justice upon earth.

If,

If, then, the powers of Europe do continue to hold trans-European dominions, with which they cannot maintain a due communication but by means of an extensive commercial system; all that we have now to consider is, how that dominion and commercial system may best be modified according to the general interests of Europe.

In the answer to this question, it is generally taken for granted, that an equal participation by all maritime states in the advantages of commerce and colonization, would be the most beneficial constitution. For it is conceived that a monopoly of colonial produce, highly injurious and oppressive to the rest, must accrue from the too great ascendant, and still more from the sole sway of any one nation in such an extensive sphere of industry and dominion.

I will, in the first place, admit the justice of this opinion, and proceed upon that supposition (not forgetting the complaints against England) to examine the distribution of the East and West Indian possessions of Europeans, before the French revolution, and at the present time.

The English were in possession of the largest and richest part of the East Indies. They had there founded the greatest empire known to those

fertile regions since the reign of the Moguls. Their agents collected the richest productions of the land, and their vessels transported them to Europe. They had opened, besides, an extensive trade with the eastern coasts of Asia, and particularly with China; and the transportation of some articles from thence, which (as tea, for example) had become of the first necessity in Europe, now formed one of the most important branches of their industry. Notwithstanding all this, the English were neither the exclusive dominators in the East Indies, nor the only traders in the Indian ocean. The French, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Danes, had a considerable share of both. The vessels of these nations visited every coast, island, harbour, and settlement, from the mouth of the Indus to Japan. They possessed factories, towns, and provinces, that rivalled those of the English. Till the end of the war of 1756, it even remained doubtful whether Hindostan was to acknowledge the sovereignty of the French or British. The empire of the Dutch in the Indian ocean, was no less important in its kind than that of the English on the continent; the exclusive possession of the spice islands was an inexhaustible source of riches. England and Holland divided the trade with China; that of Japan belonged to the Dutch alone. England was undoubtedly the preponderating state in the  
East

East Indies at the commencement of the French revolution ; but she was far from enjoying the sole dominion or the exclusive commerce of that part of the world.

In the West Indies the division was still more equal ; and if there was any preponderance, it was evidently on the side of France. St. Domingo alone outweighed all the rest of the Antilles ; and besides that invaluable island, the French possessed the richest and most important of the smaller ones. In extent of possessions, Spain was not inferior to Great Britain in the Bay of Mexico ; for Cuba alone was three times as valuable as the English islands : but the weakness and blindness of her government rendered her less powerful. Holland, Denmark, and Sweden too, had valuable settlements in the Antilles : and who would think of asserting that the possessors of Jamaica were the sole rulers in this immense archipelago, or monopolized the trade between Europe and the West Indies ?

Was it otherwise on the continent of America ? No : England, since the peace of 1783, had been confined to the most northern part of that continent, to an uncultivated, and, comparatively, poor and barren territory. The immense regions of South America, with their various treasures



tures on the surface and in the bowels of the earth, belonged to Spain and Portugal. In North America, all that did not belong to the United States on this side of the river St. Lawrence, was the property of France or Spain. With regard to extent of territory, and political weight and power, England was now hardly a state of the third order in America.

It therefore clearly appears,

1st, That before the revolution, England was not the sole possessor of European dominion in other quarters of the globe.

2dly, That France, England, Holland, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, and Sweden, enjoyed each of them some part of the European establishments in the East and West Indies ; and that the share possessed by England was far from being the greatest, or even the most important with respect to its intrinsic value.

3dly, That the trade and produce, as well as the government of those possessions, were divided among all the maritime powers ; France, England, and Holland, however, having a decided superiority over the rest.

4thly, That if England, even before the revolution, possessed an ascendant over her rivals in  
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the trade to the East and West Indies (which with respect to France is by no means certain), the causes of that ascendant are not to be found in an exclusive or even excessive dominion on her part, but must be derived from other sources \*.

Before we inquire into these, we must examine the changes which have happened in those relations since the French revolution.

On the continent of America, no alteration has taken place. Excepting the small district of Surinam, England has made no conquests; and France, Spain, Portugal, &c. have lost none of their former possessions.

In the West Indies, England has taken Martinique and some smaller islands from the French; Trinidad from the Spaniards; and from the Dutch the whole of their possessions. On the other hand, France has obtained the whole of St. Domingo, of which she before only possessed the smaller, though the richest and best cultivated part. It is easy to foresee, that at the ensuing peace, if France will consent on her part to make some sacrifices, England will have no great difficulty to give back the whole or the greater part of these conquests by

\* Vide Note NN.

way of compensation \*. But even as the case now stands, the acquisitions of France, territory for territory, and dominion for dominion, are at least equal in importance to those of England.

In the East Indies, indeed, the territorial empire of the English has been aggrandized in a great and important degree. On the one hand, the most valuable possessions of the Dutch, Ceylon, and the spice islands, have fallen under their dominion †; on the other hand, they have concluded a war, which has accomplished the ruin of the only Mogul prince yet possessing a regular power in the peninsula of Hindostan.

The first of these events has made England the sole mistress of the eastern seas: the last has established her in the entire sovereignty of the continent of India.

It is impossible to foresee, at present, whether these things will continue thus, or whether they are to suffer many important changes (particu-

\* Vide Note O O.

† This is precisely what has happened. The restoration of these conquests has been a subject of complaint and outcry to a few anti-pacific declaimers in this country; but we here find an enlightened, and surely an impartial politician, predicting it as a matter of the greatest probability, without imputing either folly or weakness to the British ministry.—*TRANS.*

larly with respect to the Dutch possessions) at the future peace between France and England. But however that may be, and whatever the changes that may then be made, the only question now before us is this: How far is the general interest of Europe connected with the division of power and territory, with the ascendancy of this or that nation, in trans-European possessions?

If these possessions were, or ever could be, an immediate source of riches and power to the countries they belong to, their relations would be a subject of no small importance to the system of Europe. For, being then the instruments of considerable political influence, they might, according as they should be concentrated or divided, immediately and essentially affect the general relations, and confirm, alter, or subvert the federal constitution. We should then have to consider them as provinces in the strictest sense of the word, as real territorial aggrandizement of the mother-country; and the balance of Europe would be affected by the conquest of the Mysore or St. Domingo, as it now is by that of Holland or Italy.

Such, however, is not the nature of those possessions. They never were an immediate source of revenue to any nation, and consequently

quently never an immediate source of greatness and power \*. The expenses of their administration and defence, either consume, or (which is more common) exceed what they produce. It is a well-known fact, that all East and West India companies that have proceeded on the principle of territorial dominion, have speedily met, or with difficulty averted their ruin. The fruitful and extensive territory which now forms the United States of America, never produced so much to the British government as a single square mile in Great Britain. A hasty glance at the East India budget, laid before parliament every year by the British ministry, is sufficient to show, upon the best authority, the true value of India, considered as a territorial possession. These so much envied conquerors, the heirs and successors of the Moguls, the rulers of thirty millions of men, and sovereigns of the richest countries on the globe, three times as extensive as their own country, are obliged to heap debt upon debt to comply with their expenses; their yearly surplus is a *deficiency*; and their empire would be a dead weight upon Great Britain, if it did not nourish the vital principle of her greatness—her extensive commerce. This is not a place to enter into a discussion of the causes of this remarkable phenomenon; they are not formed by particular rela-

\* Vide Note P P.

tions, but lie deep in the nature of the thing itself, and in the necessary condition of every administration of lands remote from the centre of government ; they will, in all times, and under all circumstances, more or less, affect every trans-European territorial dominion.

Such dominion will not, therefore, of itself, procure any considerable influence in the political relations and affairs of Europe. As far as relates to the sovereignty only, it is a matter of little moment, whether the English, the French, or the Dutch, exclusively, or altogether, or none of them, govern in the East and West Indies, in Africa, America, and all the islands of the ocean. It only becomes important as it stands connected with an advantage of another nature, which is that of commerce. It is commerce alone that can give sufficient importance to these possessions to interest Europe. It is only by an extension of the whole, or some particular branches of its commerce, which it could not have effected otherwise, that any European nation can derive material power and influence in the general system, from its dominions in distant quarters of the globe. The only case in which any state can complain of the foreign possessions of another, is when the commerce derived from those possessions only,

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is in some way injurious or oppressive to other nations. Considered in a liberal point of view, all complaints against trans-European dominion, as such, are nothing more than empty and unfounded declamations, suited only to minds entirely blinded by national prejudice.

How far the possession of distant colonies, and the exclusive enjoyment of them, are even favourable to the commerce of a nation; whether it might not attain the same greatness without those exclusive possessions, supposing the existence in other respects of the materials and opportunities necessary to its rise and progress; and whether in the cases where it has flourished in conjunction with them, that prosperity has been created by, or notwithstanding them: these are important questions which I shall leave unexamined at present. I shall confine myself to the common ideas of the influence of foreign possessions upon the prosperity and increase of foreign commerce. I ask whether, even according to these received ideas, the present greatness, or, as it is frequently called, the sole preponderance of the British commerce, can, with any show of reason, be attributed to the increase of its present foreign territory, derived from the events of the present war?

We have already seen, that it is only in the East Indies, that the possessions of the English have received any material augmentation. Their conquests in the West Indies have not been sufficiently important to throw any perceptible weight into the scale of their external commerce. If the present superiority of their trade be founded upon the extent of their possessions, it must be explained by their acquisitions in the East. The conquest of Tippoo Saib, and the capture of the Dutch settlements, must be made to account for the whole, or the greater part of it.

But it is scarcely possible that the effects of the conquest of the Mysore can yet be felt; and whoever is the least acquainted with the situation of the English East India Company, will be far from believing that conquest to have made any material addition to its real wealth, or to have given any new vigour to its commerce. It was only in one respect valuable to the possessors of Bengal; it added to the security of their possession. Like the rest of her dominions in the East, it was not useful to Great Britain as an immediate source of wealth, but as an additional security to that extensive commerce, which is one of the springs of England's greatness. That commerce might have existed without the possession of those immense regions;



a possession only necessary, because a false and barbarous policy has poisoned the relations between India and Europe; because the founders of all European establishments there, of whatever nation, have followed no other maxims than those of force and oppression; and because an unnatural dominion can only be maintained by unnatural means\*. The conquest of the Myfore is therefore of little or no weight in explanation of the commercial preponderance in question.

The acquisition of Ceylon, the Moluccas, &c. is more intimately connected with it. But, if we consider that this only increased the British commerce in one respect, which, though important in itself, is (compared with others) only a secondary branch of it, we shall be easily convinced that it is likewise insufficient to solve the problem.

The present commercial superiority of the English is the result of two principles unconnected with each other. The one of these existed *before* the revolution; the other owes its being to the *effects* of the revolution on all the other commercial states of Europe.

\* Vide Note QQ.

The incomparable activity of the English nation, the extent of its capital, its wonderful improvements in all kinds of machinery, the great expertness of its navigators, the labours of a government studious of its real interests, the excellence of its internal constitution, its political and individual character; all these constitute the first and principal basis of the ascendant of its foreign commerce. This first and chief cause is entirely independent of all changes or revolutions in the rest of the world. It was already amply displayed before the commencement of the present war: a concatenation of circumstances to be explained in another place, prevented even the war from impeding its progress; which is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in the history of the commerce and civilization of nations.

To this first constituent principle of the commercial superiority of Great Britain, a second has been added in the course of the war; which, however, compared to the former, can only be called a negative cause. The nations which formerly divided the commerce of the world with England, were reduced to impotence and inactivity, by a series of most deplorable misfortunes. The once so prosperous France beheld the ruin of her capital, her manufactories,

nufactories, her industry, her commerce, and her navigation, amidst the convulsions of a ruinous anarchy. Desolation was spread through her colonies; St. Domingo, the queen of the Antilles, was converted into an abode of misery, a wilderness of blood and ruin! Holland was plunged in the devouring abyss of an insatiable revolution; the springs of her trade were dried up; many of her internal resources were annihilated; her colonies and shipping were taken from her. One of those unfortunate contradictions, which nothing could have produced but the *war of the revolution*, compelled the most powerful ally of this nation to take an active part in its destruction, to persecute its trade in every sea, and to take possession of its most valuable possessions in the East and West Indies. Spain, to avoid a greater evil, was obliged to throw herself into the arms of France; to engage with her in the war against England, to participate the suspension of her commerce, the insecurity of her navigation, the exhaustion of her finances, and all the misfortunes by which France was for a time struck out of the list of commercial nations. The maritime states of the second order, and above all, the United States of America\*, made up, in some respects, for the defection

\* The extensive augmentation of the trade of America during this war, is too often overlooked. In latter years, her advancement

defection of France, Holland, and Spain ; but they could not altogether supply their place ; and by far the most considerable part of all trans-European commerce was concentrated in the hands of the English.

Thus gradually arose what is now called the monopoly of the colonial trade. The *intrinsic, peculiar, positive* superiority of the English, which existed before the revolution, and had already then been the occasion of some unjust and mistaken complaints, was the first and chief source of this monopoly. Had it not been for that intrinsic superiority of England's industry, all the maritime states in Europe, their commerce, and their colonies, might have been ruined, without advancing her to her present commercial greatness : but possessing those peculiar advantages, and, at the same time, the very extraordinary one of being able to preserve the source and foundation of them, even in the midst of war, England remained alone on the field when all her rivals had disappeared. The misfortunes of other nations were the accidental occasion, not the cause, of a greater,

advancement in general commerce has even been more remarkable than her great improvements in many other branches of public wealth. The trade of America to the East Indies has been carried to such an extent as to render it probable that she will soon be a formidable rival of England in that career.

perhaps only more evident, display of the principles of her power.

Supposing that which is arbitrarily and absurdly termed monopoly and tyranny, to be a positive evil for other nations (and we shall soon inquire whether it really is so), it would nevertheless still be inequitable, and ridiculous indeed, to treat this monopoly as a crime of the English people; as injustice, treachery, and usurpation on the part of the British government. The first principle of the British commercial ascendant, the true and immediate cause of it, will surely not be a subject of serious reproach to the nation which thereby acquired such advantages, or to the government that cherished and encouraged it: and England can never be made responsible for the second, which was only the accidental occasion of extending, or at least of manifesting that long determined superiority. England neither desired nor effected the French revolution, nor the horrors of her internal convulsions, nor the ruin of the French colonies, nor the subversion of the late constitution of Holland, nor the alliance between Spain and France. To what is called the monopoly of the commerce of the world, she only contributed that part for which nobody can reproach her; the rest was accomplished by circumstances which England could neither foresee, nor direct, nor avert.

But

But in order to judge how far England's monopoly of colonial produce is really prejudicial to other nations, we must carefully distinguish its effects on the commercial states, from its consequences to the consuming part of Europe only.

The nations actively engaged in the colonial trade before the revolution, are necessarily sufferers by the present state of things. One of the most important branches of their industry, is entirely cut off; and many others, more or less connected with it, are considerably straitened. The sudden destruction of their colonial systems, not only affected their foreign commerce and navigation, but was a severe check upon their internal manufactures, and the circulation of money; it diminished all the sources of private wealth, and many of the springs of public power. To them the present state of things is a serious, important, and, in some respects, an irreparable misfortune. To them the former competition was not only advantageous, but necessary, and to them it may well be permitted to represent the re-establishment of that competition as an object of the first and greatest importance.

But very different is the case with respect to that considerable part of Europe—the consumers only of colonial produce. All that immediately interests these nations, is the facility of procuring

curing those productions at the lowest price. In itself, it is indifferent to them whether the East and West Indian settlements, and their commerce and produce, are divided among many, or confined to one nation. The first is only advantageous to them when it ensures a lower price at the market; and the latter is only prejudicial when it occasions an arbitrary rise in the value of the produce.

It is rather generally believed in Europe, that those circumstances which in the course of the war have put the English in exclusive possession of the colonial trade, have at the same time empowered that nation to exercise an oppressive monopoly towards the rest of Europe in the sale of that produce. This opinion was probably created by the declamations of those, who were infligated against England by an interest of a different nature—the loss of their active part of the trade. It was fostered by political animosities, by hostile prejudices and hostile artifices; by the evident and uniform bias of most of the writers of these times, and by the prevailing temper of the public mind. This opinion, likewise, received a tinge of probability from the extraordinary rise in the price of colonial produce, which happened at the very time when that preponderance, or, as people choose to call it, that despotism of the English was established; and it received its final confirmation from the apparently

parently infallible conclusions, that, as in any single market the competition of sellers is the necessary cause of cheapness, and the monopoly of a few, the occasion of the reverse ; so likewise in the general market of Europe, the concurrence of selling nations must diminish the prices, while an arbitrary increase of them must inevitably ensue from a monopoly in the hands of one state\*.

The following reasons induce me to regard this opinion as fallacious, however generally it may be received.

In the first place, I conceive it to be impossible, that a whole people should form such an agreement as would be absolutely necessary to enable them to affix an arbitrary price to any object of their trade. A commercial nation is only a multitude of trading individuals ; and each of these, in his traffic with foreign or domestic purchasers, obeys the maxims suggested by his own immediate interest. Every individual is the natural competitor of all the rest. If an hundred persons in one commercial state were actually to conspire together to establish an arbitrary and artificial price in every market, there would always be found an hundred others, who would be willing, for the sake of a more extensive sale, to confine themselves to a smaller profit ; and this would destroy

\* Vide Note R R,



the effect of such monopolizing combinations, and restore to the article so unreasonably raised, its fair price—the original value of the produce, with the charge of conveyance, and the usual profit of the trader. That any monopoly should enable all the individuals of a commercial state to impose arbitrary prices upon their purchasers in every market of Europe, is a chimera that will not bear a moment's examination. Even supposing the government of a commercial nation to be so blind and senseless, as to put every branch of its external commerce into the hands of exclusive, and really monopolizing companies; even in this, by no means probable case, the favoured companies would, in the end, find it impossible to maintain an arbitrary price in the objects of their monopoly\*. In such a case, the system of smuggling would soon be carried to such an immense extent, as to compel the monopolists to lower their prices, or to forego their advantages altogether. My own opinion, supported and confirmed by much reflection on the subject, is, that in the intercourse among nations there can be no such thing as a monopoly, in the strict sense of the word.

2dly. The great rise which has taken place in the prices of all East and West Indian produce, within the last ten years, is so fully and satisfac-

\* Vide Note S S.

torily explained by a number of obvious causes, as to invalidate completely the assumption of its having been effected by a national monopoly. If, besides the constant and necessary advancement in the price of all articles of provision (including, of course, trans-European produce) which takes place in the ordinary course of things, we consider the extraordinary circumstances which have tended, since the revolution and the war, to increase the value of colonial produce ; if we consider the calamities which have befallen the richest colonies ; the ruin of industry, and the destruction of capital in so many of the states of Europe, and the effect of these misfortunes upon the productive power of all nations ; if we consider the dangers of navigation, which increase the price of insurance, and lessen the profits of the merchant, even in the most powerful maritime countries ; and the great mass of real substantial wealth diverted by the war from productive objects in England as well as in the rest of afflicted Europe : all these circumstances will be sufficient to account for the high prices of colonial produce as their natural and necessary consequence. The present profit of the English trader on the sale of this produce, is certainly no greater than it used to be twenty years ago : there is even reason to believe that it is less. The West India merchants of London have twice been obliged, in the course of the present war, to apply for as-

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sistance to their government, which advanced considerable sums, to relieve their pressing difficulties. The East India Company has rather added to its debts than its riches. The two classes, therefore, which must alone, or above all others, have profited by the high price of East and West India produce, if that price had been dictated by an arbitrary monopoly, have in reality derived no such extraordinary advantages from it, and have, perhaps, found it difficult even to secure their ordinary gains.

The only respect in which it is at all important to the consumers, whether they be provided with colonial produce by this or that European people, is the degree of industry and wealth of the nation they have to deal with. Among nations equal in other respects, the richest and most industrious will always sell at the lowest price. For the greater the capitals, the more active the industry, the more perfect the art and ability employed in any business, so much the more productive does it prove, so much the more speedy and certain the result, so much less exertion proportionably devoted to it, and so much less the equivalent required from the consumer. The productions of the East and West Indies, in the markets of Europe, are fruits of the navigation, the capital, the labour, and ingenuity of the nations which bring them thither. In all these points the British people stands unrivalled.

No

No nation can procure, transport, and, of course, sell so cheap as the English. As far as others possess not the same advantages and resources to enable them to sell at the same prices, and as long as they continue incapable of so doing ; so far and so long must the commercial predominance of the English, or what is improperly termed their commercial monopoly, remain a manifest advantage to the consumer, in every part of Europe\*. This appears to me so clearly founded upon the simplest principles of political economy, that I am at a loss to guess what the most prejudiced sophistry will be able to oppose to it.

Thus have we analyzed the second charge against England, the accusation of monopoly ; and we find,

1st, That before the French revolution, England was so far from possessing exclusive dominion in America or the Indies, that she did not even preponderate in the West Indies or on the adjoining continent ; while in the East she was nearly balanced by the Dutch, French, Portuguese, Danes, &c. who all of them held more or less considerable possessions there.

\* Vide Note T T.

2dly, Since the revolution in France and Holland, the territorial dominions of Great Britain have been extended in every part of the globe; in the East Indies almost to exclusive sovereignty; but, in the West Indies, not even to preponderance. How many of these additions will be permanent, remains yet to be decided by the ensuing peace.

3dly, But neither the territorial possessions of the English before the revolution, nor their conquests during the war, are sufficient to account for the extent of their almost exclusive commerce in East and West India produce. This must be referred to other causes, among which some are peculiar advantages which no man has a right to make a subject of reproach to England; others are disorders and calamities which England in no wise occasioned, and from which she derived an accidental benefit too dearly purchased on another side.

4thly, Her monopoly of trans-European productions, so far as it exists, is only immediately prejudicial to those nations who formerly took an active part in general commerce. To all the rest, to the great mass of mere consumers, it could only be hurtful if the prices of those productions were thereby considerably raised.

Since

Since this neither is, nor can be the case ; since, under the present circumstances, the English are the people from whom the consumer may expect the most moderate price ; this so much decried monopoly of East and West India commerce, which at all events would be a matter of indifference, is now even an advantage to him.

Far be it from me to assert, that it is unimportant to Europe whether France, Spain, Holland, and every other state whose industry has been fettered or impeded by the revolution or the war, shall recover the use and possession of their former strength, or continue to languish in that inactivity to which their present state condemns them. The true interest of Europe consists in the greatest possible prosperity of every one of its component parts, and the highest possible degree of wealth in all agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial nations. It requires likewise, and must, under every possible circumstance, require that every nation should possess that share (and, if possible, neither more nor less) of the mass of general wealth, including East and West India commerce and produce, which belongs to its particular situation, the nature of its industry, its disposition and capacity ; and which is necessary for  
the

the developement of its various productive powers. In this point of view, not only the philanthropic cosmopolite, but the enlightened statesman, if he be acquainted with the general principles of political economy, will desire that every country, qualified for maritime pursuits, may enjoy its due proportion of trans-European commerce and dominion. But we must not confound this just and liberal policy with the false though common views, which form the groundwork of all the complaints against the commercial superiority of England. This enlarged consideration of the subject is unknown to those who join in those complaints: were it generally understood, the declamations against England would long since have been silenced.

### III. *Of the Monopoly of English Manufactures.*

The colonial trade of the English, notwithstanding its magnitude, is only a secondary object in the general mass of British industry. Its own manufactures are by far the most fruitful source of that part of the power and riches of this nation which is derived from commerce.

After having endeavoured to point out the real nature of the colonial monopoly of the English, and to show with how little justice the  
commercial

commercial superiority of Great Britain can in that respect be termed tyrannically oppressive, or even prejudicial to other nations: I have only now to examine whether such complaints are better founded when applied to the dealings of the English in their own manufactures.

The Author of the *Etat de la France*, and a thousand writers besides, have described the preference obtained by the English manufactures in every market of Europe, as an insupportable yoke, a painful and humiliating servitude to all other nations. It is only by the impoverishment of Europe, say they, that England rises to an unnatural degree of wealth; as this wealth increases, the power is likewise augmented of straitening, confirming, and perpetuating the galling and opprobrious fetters in which all governments and countries languish in helpless inactivity. The annihilation of independence in industry, leads to the destruction of all liberty: the commercial sovereignty of the English is made the foundation of their political despotism, and England becomes more and more the lawgiver and tyrant of Europe.

A very slight examination of this unfavourable picture is sufficient to show, that the grounds of complaint upon which it is founded,



are in many respects equivocal, arbitrary, absurd, and untenable. The decided and almost exclusive preference given to English manufactures in the markets of Europe, is not the effect of compulsion, but of choice ; it is a preference freely given, continued, and confirmed ; for England has no means of introducing her productions, and putting them off by force in any part of Europe. Were the success of these productions as destructive to the industry, and as conducive to the degradation and dependence of all other countries as it is here described, it would be impossible to conceive why so many nations submitted to a yoke they might at any time throw off. For, supposing obstinate prejudices, or unaccountable fascination, to possess the people, would not their governments use every effort to bar the access of this consuming poison to their dominions ?

The force of these arguments must strike the meanest capacity, although it were unable to distinguish the relations of cause and effect in a great regular phenomenon ; and it is not a little surprising that such obvious considerations should not long since have destroyed all the flimsy tissues of sophistry.

Upon

Upon these complaints of the tyrannous oppression connected with the industry of the British nation, it naturally occurs to ask, how does this industry, so detested and abhorred, this pretended cause of such misfortunes, such misery and ruin to the rest of Europe, how does it maintain so peaceably its once acquired prerogative? Why do not all governments and individuals combine to exclude the manufactures of Great Britain from every market; and thus by one manly effort break through the fetters that encumber them? The answer is obvious—their interest forbids it; for though they have no distinct conception of the nature of that interest, there is a vague sentiment of advantage which impels them more powerfully than the visionary hypotheses of prejudice or ignorance. Let us now endeavour to develope this vague sentiment; let us divest it of the obscurity in which it is involved.

The superiority of Great Britain in European manufacture, like her ascendant in colonial commerce, is founded upon two distinct principles, one positive and the other negative.

The first is the intrinsic excellence of the productions of her industry; in other words, the result of the peculiar advantages by which Eng-

land is enabled, with less effort than other nations, to prepare manufactures of equal goodness, or with the same application of labour to deliver them better, by which means she brings her articles to market at a lower price when equally good, at the same price when superior in quality, and very often both more perfect and more cheap. The reason of this intrinsic and peculiar excellence of British manufactures is obvious ; it is owing to the progress of every art among the English, to the extensive use and improvement of machinery, to the largeness of their capitals, to the ingenuity and enterprising spirit of the people ; it is a consequence of the character and habits, the polity and constitution of the nation, which all contribute to produce and secure those advantages.

The negative principle of this ascendant is the comparative weakness and indolence of other nations, their ignorance of political economy, their neglect of many branches of industry, and their necessary dependance on the activity of foreigners ; all, more or less, consequences of their own faults.

The demand for British manufactures in the most cultivated countries of Europe, and among nations which have likewise carried industry to  
great

great perfection, is a consequence and proof of the positive superiority of that of the English. It is by that alone they have acquired, and do still retain, the markets of Germany, of most of the northern powers, and of France before and since the revolution.

Upon this, which I have called the negative superiority of the English, is founded the ascendant of their industry in Portugal, and more especially in Russia. It is not merely in the shape of commercial intercourse that it prevails in those countries ; it is there internally productive. There British adventurers, with British capital and British labour, engage in the domestic trade, and develop the interior resources of the country : there they establish manufactories on their own account. Russia and Portugal would not, however, exclude the English from their markets by the mere improvement of their native industry : for were they as highly cultivated as France and Germany, they would still, like France and Germany, prefer the produce of British labour even to their own, on account of its peculiar excellence. But the exclusive prevalence of the manufactures, and direct interference of the merchants of England, in the interior of those countries : this multiplication of their natural advantages can only proceed

from particular defects of constitution or errors of government.

As far as the predominance of British manufactures is a consequence of real, intrinsic excellence and comparative cheapness, it is clearly a positive advantage to every nation, and to civil society in general, as well as to England. It is the interest of every individual in Europe to procure the commodities he wants from the quarter where they are to be found at once the best and the cheapest.

It is every man's interest (which no one will mistake if left to himself) to purchase articles of merchandize at a lower price in another country, rather than pay dearer for the same productions at home ; and the advantage is immense when he can procure them at once better and cheaper from a foreigner than from his own countrymen. The gains of all the individuals constitute the advantage of the whole community. The true interest of a nation is always to supply its several wants by the smallest possible expense of labour and capital. The greater its economy in these respects, the more wants will it be able to satisfy, and the greater will be the surplus to be applied in augmentation of its positive wealth, and towards the furtherance of its productive powers.

powers. When the foreign commerce of a nation is governed by these principles (and they are its only groundwork in the natural course of things), it is always beneficial and productive. The interest of particular classes may sometimes be at variance with them; but the advantage of the whole (even of the individuals of those very classes, when considered as a part of the general mass) is inseparably connected with them. Manufacturers and tradesmen, and statesmen who believe them, may continue to imagine that a nation is impoverished by receiving the manufactures of another; but unprejudiced sense will suspect (and a true knowledge of the sources of general wealth will confirm it), that every branch of trade, be it where it will, if produced by an actual improvement of human industry, is beneficial to every nation concerned, as well to the purchasers as the sellers. Manufacturers and tradesmen, and statesmen influenced by them, first raised the present clamour about the dependance of Europe and the ascendant of British industry; the political enemies of England eagerly took advantage of a clamour so welcome to them; what those had only termed dependance, these inveighed against as an intolerable yoke; what those only deplored as a lamentable error, these writers described as the

last degree of weakness and abasement. Ignorance produced these absurdities ; prejudice and fraud disseminated them : and, the scarcity of just ideas concerning the true principles of political economy, has rendered ignorance and passion triumphant in an age so enlightened in other respects, and so justly proud of its attainments.

As far as the superiority of British industry is actually founded on the weakness or negligence of other nations, on the errors of their political or mercantile system ; so far does it rest upon a cause not only detrimental to the countries it disgraces, but prejudicial in its effects to every nation, and to all civil society : for the interest of the whole requires the utmost possible improvement of the powers and resources of every nation. If Russia and Portugal employ English capitals and English hands in their internal manufactures, it is a proof of some great defect in the system of their domestic industry, or an absolute faultiness in their political constitutions. To supply the one, or to amend the other, would not only be beneficial to those immediately concerned ; but every nation in Europe would feel the advantage, in as much as there is a general connexion between the productive powers of the whole.

But

But until such radical amendments shall take place, it is a clear and undeniable advantage not only to those countries that employ the labour and capitals of strangers, but to the whole system of European industry, that the means and resources of England should supply the deficiency of others. It would be a much greater misfortune if those fields of human industry which are now cultivated and enlivened by British skill and capital, were to remain waste and unproductive. That would be a positive, the present is only a relative evil ; is only such as far as it proceeds from a state of things that is itself evil ; in every other sense it is an advantage.

This analysis will enable us easily to determine how far the complaints against the ascendant of British industry are well or ill founded on the one hand, and, on the other, how far the means by which it appears possible to controvert this superiority, are salutary or pernicious.

These complaints, as far as they relate to the faulty inactivity, the weakness, and bad administration of the countries which England has made tributary to her industry, are in a certain degree well founded ; while on the other hand  
they



they are ill understood in many respects, and at all events highly unjust when made matter of accusation against England. They are well founded as far as that intrinsic inferiority which prevents a people from cultivating its peculiar resources, betrays a defective or misguided national economy, which must always be a real misfortune : they are ill understood, so far as, in such a state of things, the accession of foreign industry is the only succedaneum, and of course must be an advantage even to the nation that wants the assistance ; they are unjust as charges against England, because England can never be made responsible for the barbarism, the indolence, the unskilfulness, the natural difficulties, or the bad administration of other countries ; because England can never be blamed for profiting, to the utmost, in every lawful manner, by her arts, her industry, and spirit of enterprise, whenever she finds a field for them ; and because this mode of supplying the deficiency of industry in one country by its abundance in another, is not only beneficial to the nations receiving the assistance, but evidently advantageous to all.

But when these complaints are grounded upon the intrinsic merits of England's superior industry, they are not only extremely unjust,  
but

but in the highest degree absurd. The peculiar excellence of Great Britain in this respect, is a general advantage to all nations, if measured by the true principles of political economy.

All Europe is extremely interested in the existence of a people among whom industry and ingenuity have been carried to so wonderful an extent ; by whom numerous objects of general consumption are provided comparatively cheap and of excellent quality ; and whose astonishing activity affords a striking, and not always fruitless example to other countries. The commercial greatness of England is, in all these important respects, a manifest advantage to Europe. How could it, on these very grounds, be made a subject of complaint ? By the same rules we may judge of the fitness or unworthiness of any method that could be adopted for reducing the present superiority of Great Britain.

Every indirect diminution of this superiority, by promoting industry in those nations where it has hitherto been wanting, must contribute, not only to the prosperity of the states thus animated, but to the welfare of all Europe. The loss sustained by England in consequence of such a diminution of her commercial and artificial

ficial superiority, would be only apparent, while the benefit accruing to the rest would be real and essential.

Every direct diminution of this ascendant of Great Britain, by positively reducing her productive strength, would be prejudicial, not only to England, but to the general welfare of Europe. The advantage to other nations, of such a diminution, would be merely apparent, while the loss sustained by England, and all countries at once, would be real and essential.

The utmost possible improvement of the productive powers of every nation ; the utmost possible extension of the riches, arts, and industry of each ; is the real interest of the whole of Europe. If those who hitherto have employed the men and money of other countries to cultivate their natural resources, would now apply their own activity to the same objects, the happy change would be the occasion of a positive increase of the general produce of labour. For the sum of foreign industry, formerly employed on what they would now themselves accomplish, would not be lost because deprived of one field of action ; it would explore a new one, and there discover other sources of wealth ; it would make some further addition to the riches

of the world. The loss is therefore only apparent, which any civilized and industrious nation sustains by the elevation of others. It is the interest of England as well as of Europe in general, that industry and wealth should be increased in every corner of the globe in the highest possible degree. It is not the barbarism and poverty of other nations, but their riches and civilization, that can add to the wealth of Britain. If England were actually to impede the industry of other countries by force or fraud, she would deserve every reproach that could be heaped upon an oppressor; then, but only then, would she stand in direct opposition to the wishes, endeavours, rights, and interests of all other nations, the common enemy, the tyrant, and the scourge of Europe.

But may our better genius, may the dictates of true political economy restrain us from seeking any general advantage in the immediate degradation of England; from such inverted policy, conceived by many a narrow mind to be the height of wisdom! To weaken England would be to weaken Europe. The riches and industry of that nation belong to all other countries. The thirty millions of manufactures which England yearly adds to the commercial stock of Europe, form a great and important portion of  
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the wealth of nations. Were these even in part to disappear, what would become of the very advantageous market which England presents to all the natural productions, the grain, the wines, the metals, the wood, &c. of the continent? There would be a loss of labour, in as much as a greater quantity must then be employed to produce the same mass of necessaries, by a less perfect industry. The activity and industry excited by British capital in every commercial spot, and thence diffused over every sea, river, and province of the remotest regions of the world, would be then no more. Hence a most important loss, which it would be impossible to prevent or remedy. The short-sighted jealousy of a manufacturer, a merchant, or the statesman who adopts their narrow views, may graft the hope of its own advantage upon the project of humbling England; Europe would have no cause to rejoice if their chimerical hopes were even realized. That change is represented as a necessary step towards a general emancipation, by the sophistical enemies of England, and awaited with impatience by their ignorant and credulous followers: but a due consideration of the true interests of Europe will set it in a very different light.

The Author of the *Etat de la France* has laid down five conditions, which, in his opinion, are the  
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the necessary basis of the deliverance of all nations from the hated superiority of Great Britain. By attending to the principles above explained, we shall be able to judge with some confidence, how far the measures proposed are, in themselves, desirable, or adapted to their object. He conceives it to be necessary,

1st, That the war be terminated.

2dly, That the commercial relations of the European powers be regulated by better treaties.

3dly, That a better system be founded on the treaties, that shall hereafter define their several rights and obligations.

4thly, That the interior administration of every state be regulated by wiser maxims, and upon better principles.

5thly, That governments, always attentive to the progress and revolutions of general commerce, should proceed accordingly in the improvement of their political relations.

These rules of reform are not laid down with uncommon perspicuity or precision : but it is nevertheless easy to guess their meaning and tendency.

With

With respect to the restoration of peace, it is certain beyond all doubt, that a true peace that is, a secure and permanent one, if under the present circumstances it could be attained, would essentially ameliorate the condition of every nation. But should this so much desired peace lead to the diminution of England's commercial superiority, or, as it is so often called, to the deliverance of Europe from the yoke of Britain's tyranny : should such be the specific object of the new system of political and commercial relations to be established by it ; then its effects must either be prejudicial to England alone, and advantageous to the rest of Europe only, or must at least be beneficial to England in a less degree than to other countries. I know very well that it is the general opinion that the present war has been a source of the greatest advantages to England ; that it is almost necessary to her existence, and that the moment of its termination will bring with it the inevitable fall of her commercial greatness. But, however general this opinion may be, it is a gross and unpardonable error\*. I shall have an opportunity in a succeeding chapter, of exposing its whole weakness : at present I will only assert, as an incontrovertible truth, which I mean to prove

\* Vide Note U U.

hereafter,

hercafter, that England (excepting all unforeseen misfortunes), far from being lowered by the peace, must, in the most essential respects, be a greater gainer by it than any other nation. The re-establishment of peace will therefore either make no alteration in the commercial relations between England and the rest of Europe, or certainly not such as this author, who so passionately inveighs against them, has promised to himself and the world.

An amendment of the interior administration of every state, a wise and liberal legislation, an increased attention to the interests of commerce and industry, and a studious improvement of the true sources of the wealth of nations : these are proposals of reform in the domestic system of Europe, which undoubtedly deserve the approbation of every reflecting mind, and of every friend to humanity. Blessed be the government that adopts them in their whole extent ! Honour and praise to every writer whose energetic eloquence can rouse from their lethargic indifference, those who have hitherto neglected or refused to follow them ! With such weapons, but with such only, may Europe combat Great Britain ! The result of the contest, however, will not satisfy the detestable desires of envy ; nor the foolish and perverse



verse expectations of an ignorant mercantile policy—a self-destroying thirst after unattainable enjoyments. The rise of other nations to greater perfection would not destroy the commercial superiority of England. Every country would then feel its peculiar advantages: each would display its powers by an independent, unrestrained, and beneficial activity, in the order, manner, and degree prescribed by its nature and situation. The greatness and power of each would rest upon its own strength, and upon the strength and prosperity of the whole. But the general rise of Europe would not occasion the fall of England. It would then scarcely be conceived by enlightened men, how it could ever have been thought that the riches or poverty of one nation, could be founded upon the poverty or riches of another.

Had the Author of the *Etat de la France* confined himself to such proposals, there would have been no reason to doubt the justness, the purity, the benevolence of his views. But adhering to his false premises, he has mixed these proposals with others more doubtful and equivocal. “The commercial connexions of nations are to be founded upon better regulations;” “Their rights and obligations are to be defined by better treaties.” Wherein these better treaties and wiser combinations

combinations are to consist, remains totally unexplained; but the secret aim and true character of his proposals are betrayed, not only by numerous expressions in various parts of his work, and the general tendency of his politics, but by his explanation of what he himself calls the most important article, which is an undefined recommendation of a new political system of commercial relations. He thinks nothing more is requisite than a "single ray of light, to show to a few princes and their ministers, the real causes of their political and commercial dependence, and the true principle of their deliverance;" and he adds, "The present state of things might be immediately changed by the energy of one great power, and that power is FRANCE."

From these declarations, it is evident he did not expect the improvement of European industry, the deliverance of commerce, the prosperity and independence of all nations, either entirely or principally from the reformation of interior administrations, the freedom of trade, the improvement of domestic polity, or the wisdom of governments. Such truly beneficial causes operate slowly, and in regular progression. The mere resolution of a few princes, or the energy of a single power, may instantly alter the course of things,

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and

and change the nature of all relations. It is evident that he looks to simple, bold, and decisive political measures, for what he calls the deliverance of Europe ; and that he seeks to exalt France, and Europe eventually with France, by weakening or destroying the foundation of Britain's greatness, by means of certain combinations, which he conceals for the present, though they are easily discovered. His favourite object therefore is, the immediate degradation of England ; which, according to the principles above explained, is sufficient to warrant his condemnation.

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I conceive that the foregoing observations have nearly fulfilled the object I had in view. My design was to rectify the prevailing opinion, with respect to the dangers and evils arising from the commercial superiority of England. I flatter myself I have sufficiently proved that neither the maritime statutes of Great Britain (I speak of her domestic regulations), nor what is called the British monopoly of colonial produce, nor the indisputable superiority of her manufactures, afford any real or just cause of accusation or complaint. In my inquiry into these complaints, I have uniformly adhered to those principles, which every enlightened

enlightened mind now reverences with unqualified assent ; which alone can lead to the perfection of political economy ; and from which Europe has to expect the most important improvements in every branch of general welfare. On these indisputable principles, it is evident that what the ignorant multitude, instigated by sophistical declaimers, decry as the commercial tyranny of the English, is in reality a most essential part of the wealth, an active principle of the industry, and a fruitful source of the present and future riches of all nations ; that the only method of diminishing the superiority of British industry, which can be recommended or admitted, is the promotion and encouragement of the same activity in other countries, which would benefit the whole without injuring England ; and that every project for actually destroying the foundations of Britain's power and commercial greatness, by direct and violent attempts upon it, must ultimately prove its author an enemy to the general welfare of Europe.

There is therefore nothing in England's commercial system, and in the influence of that system upon the welfare of other nations, which can support or justify the heavy charges brought against her. In her peaceful relations, we see

her in constant and perfect harmony with the domestic interests of the social system of Europe. If she have in any way deserved the reproaches of her numerous adversaries, the causes must be sought in other relations ; they must be founded on her conduct in war, towards countries not immediately engaged in it ; and on the abuse of her well-earned superiority in her oppression of the weak. How far they really are so, will be discussed in a sequel to the present work.

NOTES.

## N O T E S.

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### NOTE A, p. 6.

**I**N the language of the Germans, which is characterized by the same spirit of minute discrimination and elaborate analysis that pervades their philosophy, the term *public law* has a more general and abstract signification than is here intended to be given to it. In order to avoid all ambiguity, I will therefore define its meaning in the present work. It is intended to represent the law of nations in its practical, and not in its theoretical, or what is commonly called its natural sense ; and the words *federal system* or *constitution*, *political system*, &c. are to be regarded as signifying the same thing as often as they occur in the following sheets.—  
AUTHOR.

The above note is still more necessary to an English than a German reader ; for without it there would be an obscurity from the use of those phrases pervading the whole work, The term *federal constitution* properly signifies, and is commonly used to denote such a league between independent states, as formed the Swiss and Dutch republics ; it is here made to comprehend the whole system of political relations, and the usages which

A A 4

regulate

regulate the conduct of states in their transactions with foreign powers.

The *jus gentium*, or law of nations, as it has hitherto been received, is composed of a traditional and customary, as well as a positive code. But the political writers on the part of France, finding the doctrines of all the great authors of the last century, more favourable to the British, than to their own system, have lately been labouring with consummate art, to set aside their authority, and to persuade mankind that there neither has been, nor can be, any law of nations not expressly established by treaty.—TRANS.

#### NOTE B, p. 26.

THE treaty of 1756 has been a favourite topic of declamation for all the decriers of the old political system, from Favier to the Author of a work, intitled, *Coup d'Œil politique sur l'Europe* (in 2 vols. 1800); and I must confess it gave me a favourable opinion of the writer whose work is now before me, that, so far from describing that treaty as one of the causes of the revolution, he has not even mentioned it in the course of his work. His silence induces me to conclude that his opinion is the same as mine on that head.

The above note was written before I had seen Segur's edition of Favier, in which many valuable additions have been made to the original work. I think this is the first French publication in which the treaty of 1756 has been represented in its true light, such as it must hereafter

after be considered by impartial history ; and it could not but gratify me to find my own opinion confirmed by the judgment of a statesman of such abilities and experience as Segur.

#### NOTE C, p. 43.

IT has even been asserted that the discovery of America would have been more beneficial to Europe, had it been deferred to a later period ; and I am not a little inclined to assent to that opinion. Had the greater part of Europe been prepared for the discovery of the New World, by a high degree of civilization and industry, she would necessarily have derived more important advantages from the valuable connexions and extensive commerce to which that event gave rise. These new objects of industry would then have presented themselves in their natural order, which has now been in a certain degree inverted. The discovery of America was the occasion of a revolution ; and every revolutionary innovation in the state and progress of humanity, is more or less unfavourable in its effects. We must not, however, be so unjust as to deny that, even as it happened, that great event was highly beneficial to the social existence, and materially contributed to the improvement and welfare of Europe.

#### NOTE D, p. 59.

THE Author is pleased to draw a contrast between the history of those times and the present ; which he makes the foundation of a bitter censure on the political system  
of



of Europe. "The European powers then coalesced," says he, "to support a revolution in England, to preserve England from the dangers of Catholicism, to add the naval power of Holland and Portugal to that of England. In our times we have seen a coalition of Europe to prevent a revolution in France, to maintain the Catholic religion in France, and to cripple the French navy, in order to render her incapable of coping with England." But this apparent contradiction in their maxims and conduct, is explained by the uniformity of their motives, under circumstances of quite contrary natures. The revolution of 1688 in England, was consistent with the security of Europe; so that foreign powers were impelled by the strongest interest to give it every possible furtherance, whatever might be their opinions of its authors, and whatever their inclinations or aversion to the vanquished or triumphant party. The French revolution in the year 1789, or rather in 1791, before which time there can be no question of a coalition against it, was inimical to the security of Europe; and had there been no other motive for asserting the cause of monarchy; had most of the parties to the coalition been inclined by their ordinary interests, rather to desire the humiliation, than the prosperity of the reigning house; yet the same interest which united the greater part of Europe against the STUARTS at the English revolution, compelled the whole of them to take part with the BOURBONS against the revolution in France.

## NOTE

## NOTE E, p. 78.

FOREIGNERS must be carefully admonished not to rely with implicit confidence on the authority of Mirabeau, in forming their ideas of the Prussian monarchy under Frederick II. The merit of his ingenious work, which in many respects still deserves great praise, is much diminished by three very important defects. 1st, The inaccuracy and incompleteness of his information on many heads; principally owing to the hurry in which the work was executed, and the levity of Mirabeau in trusting to many incompetent coadjutors. 2dly, His blind attachment to the *physiocratic system*, which has often induced him to pronounce most unjustly upon establishments and institutions not according with that system. 3dly, That it was written for the times; that every part of it was adapted to the circumstances of the moment; that it was made subservient to a favourite theory, and published with particular views.

## NOTE F, p. 85.

GALANTI's celebrated work (*Diserizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*), of which the first part appeared in 1788, and which presents an invaluable collection of instructive observations and excellent principles, in every branch of political economy, was written under the auspices of the Neapolitan government, who provided the Author with materials, and dedicated to the King. Nor was Galanti the only writer who was openly encouraged to assert and diffuse among his countrymen, the true principles of government and legislation. Ge-  
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novelli (who may in some respect be considered as the founder of a new school), Filangieri, Melchior Delphico, Grimaldi, and other philosophic writers at Naples, were authors of systems and essays which might have done honour to the most ingenious of the French Encyclopædists. The literature of Italy, during twenty years before the revolution, was a splendid commentary on the extraordinary progress of the science of political economy in most of the Italian states.

#### NOTE G, p. 92.

FAR be it from me to attempt to justify the *system of partition*; I regard it as one of the most odious and pernicious events of the eighteenth century. It is nevertheless, in some respects, a proof of the existence of a balance of power, and, I will venture to assert, a proof of a more benevolent and peaceable spirit of politics in Europe. The system of partition, when properly considered, though it be more repugnant in appearance, is not more unjust in reality, than the numerous wars of conquest and aggrandizement, of which the three last centuries furnish such a melancholy history. The idea of aggrandizement without conquest, evidently originated from two characteristic principles of modern politics. It showed, 1st, That no single state could engage in plans of conquest, without the concurrence of its neighbours; 2dly, That even when aggrandizement was to be attempted by a violation of justice, the way of negotiation was preferred to the destructive chance of war. If the disproportion between Poland and her neighbours had been as great in the fifteenth or sixteenth,

sixteenth, as it was in the eighteenth century ; her independence would have been equally annihilated. The only difference is, that she would then have been expunged from the list of nations by a dreadful war, and would have probably been the prey of a single conqueror ; whereas she has now been divided by an arbitrary but peaceful treaty, and a new balance of power has been established upon her ruins.

#### NOTE H, p. 97.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* has stated some truths on this head, which are so remarkable, and so conducive to my object, that I cannot refrain from quoting them. “ France has never been conquered since the irruption of the Franks ; she has always been governed by a common system of legislation, nearly the same in all her provinces. Her sovereigns have given laws to almost every civilized people ; and many of the European thrones have been filled by French princes. France, since the adoption of her present name, has never been occupied by hostile armies but partially, and for a short time. Since the establishment of the Franks, she has never obeyed a foreign prince. It would be difficult to cite a war in which France did not carry the terror of her arms into the very heart of her enemy’s dominions : all the victories of France recorded by history, are distinguished by Spanish, Italian, or German names. Her armies returned at the end of every war to maintain the uniformity of the national character, the integrity of her provinces, and the inestimable system  
of

of her frontiers."—Such was France *before the revolution.*

NOTE I, p. 115.

I WILL not venture into the dark labyrinth of the disturbances in Holland, or touch on the respective pretensions and respective errors of the several factions ; but I have a general observation to make on those affairs which is too impartial not to be subscribed to by all parties, whether of the past, or present time. It was neither the restless intrigues of the anti-Orange, nor the usurpations of the Orange party, that formed the chief cause of the irreconcilable dissensions of the Dutch, the weakness of their government, and the gradual decline of their former greatness : they were owing to the fundamental, perhaps irremediable errors in the constitution of the state. If the changes introduced by Prussia and England in 1787, could have effected a permanent reform of that constitution (which the internal condition of the country at that time renders very doubtful), they would have been highly beneficial to Holland, and even France would perhaps have gained more by that revolution in the end, than by all her intrigues with the factions she supported. A powerful executive government, an effective Stadtholder, would certainly have rendered more essential service to the state, than a prince confined and impeded in all his movements, possessing one day the authority of a king, and another, scarcely that of a burgomaster. If this would have been the real interest of Holland, it must have been that of her allies likewise ; for an influence that is only founded on a continuance

tinuance of the weakness and distractions of the country intended to be benefited, can never be for the advantage of the power that seeks to establish it. Such was always the influence of France in Holland. Upon the principles pursued by France, there was no chance of recovery from the anarchy in which the country was involved ; had she succeeded in abolishing the Stadtholdership, that recovery would have been equally distant. The revolution of 1787 opened at least a door to it ; and though in itself it were only the work of interest or passion, yet a considerate and comprehensive policy would, even in the situation of France, have encouraged it.

#### NOTE K, p. 118.

ONE of the greatest authorities among the political writers of France, has lately given a very decided opinion against so much of the above reasoning as relates to that country. These are the remarkable words of Segur : “ I am persuaded there never was a period in which the French monarchy enjoyed a higher degree of consideration, than in the years between 1783 and 1787 ; that is, from the peace which concluded the American war, till the revolution in Holland.” *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe (par Favier), augmentée de Notes, &c. par L. P. Segur*, vol. ii. p. 97.

#### NOTE L, p. 119.

THE war for the succession to the throne of Spain was a striking proof that the true theory of the federal constitution had already attained to great maturity. It was  
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not the trifling anecdote of the Dutchess of Marlborough (which is even now treated by the Author of the *Etat de la France* as a great political event), but the death of the Emperor Joseph I. that occasioned the alteration of the secret dispositions of the allies. They first formed an alliance with Austria to prevent the inordinate aggrandizement of France; but the predominance of Austria was no less an object of jealousy to them. As soon as they had reason to fear that the powers of Austria and Spain might be united in the same hands, they renounced their former plans, and inclined to peace with France. The conduct of England throughout this war, and in the negotiations at Utrecht, as well as in the separate negotiations which preceded the congress at that place, were, in every respect, agreeable to the principles of a wise and enlightened federal policy.

#### NOTE M, p. 122.

THAT this was the real situation of Austria, must be evident to every person acquainted with the memorable negotiations concerning the first partition of Poland. Could any doubt remain on the subject, it must be completely dispelled by the most incontrovertible testimony—the positive declaration of Frederick II. In the works left behind him, he has very candidly related the difficulties which the system of partition met with at the court of Vienna; he expressly says, that Austria had no alternative but to accede to that project, or to venture a war with Russia and Prussia; and he gives us the following passage from the answer of Prince Kaunitz to the first proposal of the measure, as part of his reasons  
for

for objecting to it, "That the execution of such a plan would render the situation of Europe more critical than ever, and that he advised his Majesty the King of Prussia not to engage in any such projects." *Memoires depuis 1763 jusqu'à 1775, chap. i. (Œuvres posthumes de Frederic II. vol. v.).*

#### NOTE N, p. 125.

IT even appears from a memorial of the Comte de Vergennes, which has since come to light, that the cabinet of Versailles was at that time seriously inclined to renounce the alliance of Austria, and to declare war against the Emperor, should there be no other means of preserving Holland. This important paper (printed in the last edition of Favier's Memoirs) completely refutes, in my opinion, all that the Author of the *Etat de la France* has said concerning the political system of Europe before the revolution.

#### NOTE O, p. 137.

THERE is another point of view in this question which I shall merely mention, without laying any stress upon it, because it might very properly be objected, that the advantages alluded to, are only of an accidental, and not of a permanent nature. If two nations are increased in the same proportion to their former extent, the result would be most advantageous to that which best knows how to cultivate and improve its acquisition, to consolidate its new with its old possessions; to that, in short, whose system of administration is the most wise and regular. Without disparagement to any other go-  
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vernment, it may be permitted to assert, in conformity to the opinions of the greatest statesmen in Europe, that in this respect likewise, the partition of Poland was more useful to Prussia than any of the powers concerned in it.

NOTE P, p. 142.

I MIGHT in strictness have confined myself to the first partition; for that alone is within the sphere of my present reasoning. It appeared to me, however, most advisable to consider the subject in its whole extent, in order not to be obliged to recur to it.

At the same time it must be confessed, that neither all the beneficial consequences of the final dissolution of Poland, nor the whole of what I have above said, can be referred to the first partition; for it is not always fair in politics, to reason from the greater to the less. It must however appear to any one who has considered the above arguments, and does not entirely disapprove them, that many of them, and principally perhaps the most important, will serve to explain the political bearings of the partition of 1772, as well as the events of 1793 and 1795.

NOTE Q, p. 146.

EVERY reflecting person, and doubtless every enlightened Russian, will give his unqualified assent to the opinion of the Author of the *Etat de la France*, expressed in the following words: “ The Emperor of Russia would be one of the greatest and most powerful princes of his time,

time, if for the pompous inscription placed by the flatterers of Catherine on the gates of Cherfon—‘*The road to Constantinople,*’ he would substitute this more wise and glorious sentence:—‘*The strength of this empire shall henceforth be employed to govern, and not to aggrandize it.*’

NOTE R, p. 149.

THIS argument is farther strengthened by the reflection, that the agreement which led to the partition of Poland, related to an object in the midst of the three powers, and concerning which, their interests may easily be conceived to have been the same. But it would be difficult to point out another object within the sphere of their political existence, in which a similar relation could induce them all three to unite in a common project.

NOTE S, p. 155.

IT is not my intention to assert, that a truly wise policy would not consider peace, even with France, as a very desirable object for England. I am only speaking of what is likely to happen, and especially of what is, and always has been, the case. A war with France may, under certain circumstances, be unavoidable by England; and it will always continue to be thus, until at length the nations of the world shall recognise their true interests, and for ever renounce war of every kind; a period which is probably not very near, which is perhaps never to be ranked among the realities of the world. But with any other continental power, war is, under

every circumstance, contrary not only to the general and permanent, but to the immediate and temporary interests of England. It is not indeed impossible to imagine conjunctures, in which the British ministry may be obliged to engage in a continental war, to which France is not a party; but these would always result from unnatural, constrained, and momentary situations: such a war would always be a sacrifice made by England, would be regarded by her as a necessary evil, and, in the natural course of things, there would always be found means of avoiding it. With France alone (according to the prevailing ideas of the interests of nations) war might sometimes be more advantageous to England than peace; it is only by a war with France that she could have any prospect of gain, though it were but transient and relative.

#### NOTE T, p. 156.

THE exceptions which might be argued against me are either of no importance, or under such circumstances as render them rather favourable, than contrary to my assumptions: for,

1st, The negotiations, alliances, and armaments against Spain, Austria, &c. in the reign of George I. were for the most part occasioned by the interests of Hanover. These, it is well known, have never been considered as the interests of Great Britain; to which, on the contrary, they have frequently been very opposite, and with which they have only been occasionally combined. A British monarch could hardly act in concert with France as King of England; and nothing of what  
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passed

passed between the treaty of Utrecht and the year 1740, was immediately connected with the national affairs of Britain. The treaty of Hanover (1725), of Seville (1729), and Vienna (1731), were not British treaties.

2dly, The rupture with Spain in the year 1739, is the only instance of a war commenced by Britain in the eighteenth century, of which France was not the object. It is well known that the British ministry were averse to it, that they yielded reluctantly to the violence of the popular opinion, and conducted it very remissly. It made no alteration in the general relations of Europe; and soon after lost itself in the following war concerning the Austrian succession, so completely, that at the peace of Aix la Chapelle the objects that occasioned it were not even mentioned.

3dly, The Russian armament in the year 1790, appeared about to involve England, for the first time, in a continental war, in which France was not directly concerned, and in which the interests of France were evidently embarked in the same cause. The object of that armament was most undoubtedly a wise one, and it certainly was advantageous to Europe: at the same time the aversion to any participation in it, was so strong in England, that the ministry were compelled to relinquish their designs, and to leave the care of maintaining the balance to the King of Prussia alone.

NOTE U, p. 162.

THE writers who may be regarded as the organs of the French government, have not failed to boast on

every occasion of the superiority which the consciousness of this danger on the part of England appears to afford them. I will adduce an instance from one of the most esteemed among them, and quote a passage from Favier, which is remarkable, not only because the words are so explicit, but on account of the inference he draws from his position. After speaking of the projected descent in 1756, he continues thus: "In order to keep *Hannibal from the gates*, England must and will occupy the only avenue by which we can approach her: she must keep possession of the sea, whence every nation will be excluded that does not possess a powerful navy as well as maritime coasts. In a word, it is fear alone that renders England so haughty, so insolent, and so unjust toward France: but it is that deliberate reflecting fear which inspires the weak to profit by all the advantages afforded by the neglect or ignorance of the strong," &c. Upon this passage there is the following note by Segur, the last editor of these Memoirs: "What Favier has here said of the British ministry, has been verified by experience; it is fear that renders them implacable. They know that France, at peace with the continent, and under the direction of a prudent and active government, would soon attain the superiority to which Nature has destined her, and force England to take her station among powers of the second order."

These are undoubtedly extravagant exaggerations: but when we find the very same writers declaiming incessantly against the despotism, the supremacy, the all-threatening tyranny of the British government, and  
advancing

advancing such assertions as these, we cannot but admire the naïveté of their inconsistency.

NOTE V, p. 165.

THIS war was at first strongly opposed in England, and the adversaries of the minister heaped the severest censures upon it. Since the Spanish succession war, there had always been a party that would listen to nothing of what they called British continental politics; and desired to separate England entirely from the affairs of the continent. It was, however, remarkable, that as soon as any member of this party received a place in the ministry, he renounced his former principles. Lord Carteret, one of Walpole's most formidable opponents, and among the most violent declaimers against all foreign politics, changed his opinion when he became minister, and defended the conduct of England in the Austrian succession war, upon grounds of which posterity will certainly admit the solidity: and even the great Chatham, who so often had condemned and ridiculed the balance of Europe, and all interference in continental affairs, afterwards publicly confessed in Parliament that "America had been conquered in Germany."

NOTE W, p. 166.

THE true cause of the war in America was the uncertainty of the French and English limits there; and the dispute arose upon no trifling object. The point to be decided was, whether France should completely enclose the possessions of England, within a straight line

from the river St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, and thus for ever exclude the industrious cultivators of the finest colonies in the world, from the fertile countries beyond the western mountains. The right was alike on either side ; because the matter had never been regulated by treaty. It is always difficult in such cases to point out the author of the war.

But with regard to Germany, there existed no such uncertainty. Whoever has considered with attention the transactions of that time, will find no reason to doubt that England was involved, much against her inclination, in the war on the continent. The treaty of 1756, concluded with Prussia by George II. was, in the strictest sense of the word, defensive. The King of England merely desired neutrality for his German dominions. If France had not forgotten her own interest, and attacked Prussia and Hanover ; England would have remained an idle spectator of this theatre of hostility. I only mention this as a fact, for such a neutrality would undoubtedly have been contrary to the true interest of England ; and it was fortunate for Europe, that the bad policy of France compelled Great Britain to adopt a better system.

#### NOTE X, p. 168.

EVEN coming from them, they appear unfair when we consider that of all the wars waged between France and England in the eighteenth century, that of 1756 is the only one of which the result was immediately prejudicial to the former. For notwithstanding the victories of Blenheim and Malplaquet, so glorious to the allies, it cannot

cannot be asserted that the peace of Utrecht was disadvantageous or humiliating to France.

NOTE Y, p. 182.

THE declaration of the first National Assembly, "that France for ever renounced all wars of conquest," made more profelytes to the revolution in every part of the world than any other, perhaps than all the rest of their professions. But this declaration, like every thing that was praiseworthy at the beginning of the revolution, (who would refuse to acknowledge some good amidst such an infinity of ill?) was not produced by the revolution, but was a consequence of the ideas and opinions prevalent among all nations before that event. The chiefs of the revolution did nothing but express the sentiments already generally entertained. That is the extent of their merit and glory: for they were so far from realizing the hopes of mankind, that they even destroyed in desperate experiments, all that had been accumulated and attained in half a century; while they held out the golden promise of everlasting peace, they plunged the world in endless war.

NOTE Z, p. 192.

THE Author even says, "In the last thirty years the powers of Europe had enjoyed the spectacle of France's degradation;" and was it at the end of that period, at the very time when they had attained the object of their wishes, that these unwise statesmen (if any such ever existed), who rejoiced in the humiliation of France, found



found it necessary to embrace half a world in blood, in order to overwhelm degraded and ruined France with the united forces of all Europe ?

NOTE A A, p. 195.

I SHALL touch the more lightly upon it, as I have treated the subject at some length in a late publication, "On the Origin and Character of the War against the French Revolution." I must apologize to those who have honoured that work with their attention, for briefly recapitulating in the present chapter, the arguments I have there employed, which I am forced to do from the nature of my present reasoning.

NOTE B B, p. 208.

It will perhaps be objected to me, that there is room to suspect some of the nations engaged in this unfortunate war, of having been influenced during the course of it, by views of gain or conquest. Without inquiring whether, and in what instances, the suspicion be well founded ; I only have to observe, that it can in no respect invalidate my present reasoning. My object is only to prove that the war against the French revolution did not and could not originate in a league produced by motives of interest. The cause of the war has not the smallest connexion with what may have been desired, projected, or attempted afterwards, when the coalcesed powers, destitute of all plan, were a prey to jealousy, dissensions, and mistrust. So unfavourable, moreover, is my opinion (as will be more fully shown hereafter)

after) of the system on which, and the means by which the war was carried on by the allies, that I shall not be much disinclined to admit the possibility and even the probability of a temporary departure from its object, and an inconsiderate adoption of measures directly contrary to it.

NOTE C C, p. 225.

THE union of the Austrian Netherlands with Holland under a prince of the House of Orange, would have answered the purpose more completely than any other political combination. It is hardly possible to enumerate the beneficial consequences that Europe would have derived from the execution of such a plan. The same idea may have suggested itself to many politicians, but it has never been so completely argued as by the Author of *La Prusse et sa Neutralité*.

NOTE D D, p. 248.

THAT one of the two might be the ally of France in a war against the other (a case which certainly cannot be ranked among absolute impossibilities), is a supposition I have taken no notice of: but in order to set the contrast between the present and the former state of Europe in the strongest light, we need only to consider this case for a moment: before the revolution, an alliance between France and one of the great powers of Germany, was among the ordinary combinations of politics; whereas at present it is scarcely possible to think on the consequences

sequences of such an alliance to the state against which it would be directed in the event of a war.

#### NOTE E E, p. 257.

It is certain, however, that even in the ordinary course of things, politics would be led into frequent errors, were it to build too confidently on the presumption, that the interest of every government is a criterion of its conduct. In the first place, the true interest of a nation is a matter of much extent and uncertainty; the conception of which depends greatly upon the point of view in which it is contemplated, and of course upon the ability to choose the proper one. It must likewise be confessed, that even the immediate interests of states are oftener sacrificed to private views and passions, than is generally imagined; that many nations have misunderstood them during centuries, and some perhaps have never known them: we must therefore go cautiously to work when we reason on these grounds in politics,

#### NOTE F F, p. 262.

In this enumeration of the principles of perpetual discord between France and her neighbours, I have passed over one of the most active and important, on which, however, I shall not lay any stress, because there prevails much difference of opinion with regard to the extent of its influence; and because it would really be extremely difficult to calculate its future probable effects with any certainty. Who will take upon him to say

say whether two systems so thoroughly dissimilar in themselves, and in their constituent principles, as, on the one hand, *that wherein every constitution like the French must rest*, and on the other, *that upon which the ancient system of Europe is founded*; who will decide whether these so opposite systems can exist together? And who does not perceive that this essential contrariety in the first principles of public power, must lead to continual uneasiness, mistrust, and disturbance? that it must be an ever fruitful source of open and secret opposition, of concealed or declared enmity?

NOTE G G, p. 267.

IN plain language, these fundamental laws may be stated thus: 1st, No alliance must be formed but for the purpose of securing the continuance of the ascendant of FRANCE, or of contributing to its farther extension in peace; and for organizing the means of opposing every attempt to diminish it in war. 2dly, No alliance must be formed but for the purpose of destroying the influence of ENGLAND both in peace and war, in order that there be no longer any rival to the preponderance of France. This is the true and only meaning of both the essential principles of our Author; his whole work is a continued commentary on this theme; and he has not even thought it worth while to leave any room for a different explanation.

NOTE H H, p. 274.

IT is not a little remarkable, that the Author should have defined the characteristics of all constrained and  
unnatural

unnatural alliances so clearly and explicitly in the beginning of his chapter on the new system of French alliances, as to render it inconceivable how he could, in the next moment, speak of the present relations of Switzerland, Holland, &c. in terms of praise, nay, of admiration. After saying that similarity of interest must be the foundation of every true alliance, he adds, "Beyond this principle there is nothing but compulsory ties, which the tyranny of a few nations endeavours in vain to cover with the name of alliances; and to which the weak only submit with the hope of finding in some favourable change, the means and opportunity of throwing off the yoke." Can any thing be more striking than this picture? Any man who looks at the present state of Europe may put the names to it.

#### NOTE I I, p. 282.

A TREATY of peace is naturally regulated by all the circumstances of the respective situations of the belligerent powers; and in order to judge of it, we must consider it in more than one point of view. It would therefore be a great error to regard every renunciation of conquests, as a direct proof of moderation and forbearance; for powerful motives of another kind might compel the conqueror to make these concessions. It would evidently be ridiculous, for example, if it were to be accounted a merit to the Directory, that it did not insist at the treaty of Leoben, on the cession of the German and Italian districts then occupied by its armies. For it was obvious to all the world, that France could not have maintained those acquisitions,  
however

however great her inclination might have been to do so.

#### NOTE K K, p. 301.

THIS act was indeed created with the intention of injuring the Dutch ; but its subsequent confirmation and maintenance, has been the consequence of a judicious policy. " What though several of the provisions of this celebrated act," says Adam Smith, " may have been dictated by national antipathy ? they are nevertheless as wise as if they had been productions of consummate wisdom."

#### NOTE L L, p. 302.

IT is only in one respect that the Navigation Act could have promoted the commercial interests of Great Britain : as there are few countries so advantageously situated for foreign trade, this law, which operated so forcibly to urge the progress of a very important branch of England's industry, may have had an effect somewhat like the temporary monopoly by which the first establishment of an useful manufacturing or commercial undertaking is sometimes favoured. But supposing this to have been the case, the Navigation Act ought only to have been a temporary, and not permanent statute. That it was not the case, is sufficiently evident, since the commerce of Great Britain did not acquire a decided or perceptible preponderance till fifty years after the passing of the Navigation Act. In the year 1688, the foreign shipping that frequented the ports of England,

was

was half as great as her own ; the former being 195,000, and the latter 190,000 tons ; which in the year 1696, even fell to 91,000 tons, while the foreign shipping still maintained itself at 83,000.

NOTE M M, p. 305.

HOLLAND was the only nation in Europe that could have imitated the English Navigation Act without a dereliction of true policy and sound reason. But although one of the above-mentioned conditions, viz. the advantage of extending her maritime system, existed almost as much in the case of Holland, as of England ; yet the other was entirely wanting. Holland was not sufficiently independent of other nations to adopt exclusive measures against them ; she stood too much in need of their assistance to prescribe burdensome restrictions to them. Moreover, the English Navigation Act was considerably modified in favour of Holland, by subsequent stipulations ; for she enjoyed the privilege of carrying to England, as her own produce, all articles of merchandise brought from Germany down the Rhine.

NOTE N N, p. 315.

THE Author of the *Etat de la France* even goes so far as to make it the object of a distinct charge against the English, that they labour with unremitted assiduity in pursuit of establishments in hitherto unexplored regions. “ Countries hardly known to Europe,” says he, “ have received English names ; and others yet undiscovered await English appellations.”—“ In the eastern parts of Asia, her discoverers examine every coast ; her agents subject

subject all the maritime districts to her commerce, and propose her friendship to the princes they belong to." "In Africa we behold a similar spectacle—travellers inflamed with the thirst of discovering countries yet unknown to the traffic of Europeans, traverse that continent in all directions, perish there, and are followed by successors impatient to replace them; all of them feeding their insatiable employers with the splendid hope of procuring them the priority of commercial intercourse with nations richer than the dominions of Montezuma, and cities more extensive and populous than London."

All this is perfectly true ; but who would ever have expected that the enterprising spirit, the unremitting exertions, the successful labours of a great people in the discovery of unexplored regions : these best titles to fame and honour, these benefits conferred on all nations, and on all posterity : who would have suspected that these, and with these the courage and devotion of individuals, would be made the subjects of accusation and reproach ?

#### NOTE OO, p. 316.

It is constantly asserted in all French manifestos and publications, that the English are indebted to treachery for all the East and West Indian possessions taken from the Dutch since 1795 ; which trite accusation has lately been made the subject of official articles in the Paris papers. It is not worth the while to enter here into a minute refutation of them. A judicious reader will

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find



find the following brief observations sufficient: 1st, When the established constitution of any country is subverted by a violent revolution, which expels its former government; and particularly when that revolution is accomplished by a foreign power, it must, upon every principle of right, be permitted to such of its subjects and officers, as find themselves beyond the reach of the new authority (as for example, the governors, &c. of the Dutch possessions in India), to adhere to their former government and constitution. And should there remain no prospect of their re-establishment, those officers, &c. (provided they have not voluntarily and explicitly recognised the new government) are fully at liberty to put themselves under the protection of a nation that supports their former sovereign, rather than submit to the power that expelled him, or to the new government which they consider as an usurpation, founded upon the authority of strangers. Such a conduct is so far from deserving the name of treachery, that it is, on the contrary, the only one which is consonant with integrity and principle. It is a consequence of every violent revolution, that conscience is left the only arbiter of right and wrong; and there can be no treachery where conscience is obeyed. 2dly, It is no less unjust to impute such acquisitions as a crime to a nation. After the revolution in Holland, England had no alternative but either to leave the Dutch settlements in the hands of the French, or, what was the same thing, of the Batavian government, or to take possession of them herself: she naturally chose the last; and this proceeding was not in any respect less justifiable than a regular conquest in a just war. The true authors of the injury  
which

which Holland sustained, were those who devoted that country to a fatal revolution, and thereby condemned England to treat it as an enemy.

It is not a little surprising to find the accusation of treachery advanced against the governors and officers of the Dutch settlements, and the charge of perfidy applied to the British ministry, by the advocates of a government, indebted for most of its conquests to the co-operation, to give it no harsher name, to the co-operation of men who favoured and assisted the plans and enterprises of a foreign power against their lawful sovereign. Let every friend of justice in or out of France, assign the proper term to such co-operation, and give a name to the conduct of those who made use of it.

#### NOTE P P, p. 318.

THE only exception to this is, where gold and silver mines constitute the sole productions of foreign settlements. Spain and Portugal were the only powers who derived a direct revenue from their American provinces. But even these extraordinary cases are no exception to the general principle ; for their revenues, instead of adding at all to the strength of their governments, were the immediate causes of the decline and weakness of both.

#### NOTE Q Q, p. 322.

IN order to ensure the commerce of Europe with India and China, it is now become absolutely necessary,

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that

that the peninsula of Hindostan be governed by a great military power capable of protecting it. Were this power in any way annihilated, the whole connexion must necessarily be lost for a long time. In the present state of things, the dominion of the English in the East Indies is not only the foundation of their own trade, but secures that of all other nations; and as the commerce of the East Indies is become an object of the first importance to every people, the empire of the British in that part of the world ought and must be considered as a general benefit; and is in a certain sense to be regarded as a common property.

#### NOTE R R, p. 329.

BESIDES these causes of the general complaint against England on account of the monopoly of colonial produce imputed to her, there is another, which, on a closer examination of the public opinion, will perhaps appear to constitute a more important part of it. The consumption of colonial produce has increased in a very great degree throughout all Europe during the last twenty years; a circumstance which the enlightened statesman will find no difficulty to explain, nor any reason to deplore. The dependance of the consuming nations on the industry of the colonial traders, is therefore considerably increased, and the drain of specie occasioned by the importation of that produce is every where more sensible. This is not the place to examine how far such increased consumption, and the consequent loss of specie, are positive evils; and I shall not trouble the reader with the reasons which induce me to believe,

believe, that, according to the true principles of political economy, they do not deserve the appellation. But the greater part of the statesmen and politicians of Europe certainly do consider that increased consumption, and what they term the unfavourable balance resulting from it, as a serious evil which cannot be too strenuously combated. At the same time they daily perceive that all their complaints, exhortations, and projects; that even their active contraventions, their heavy duties, their prohibitions, and their incessant researches after imaginary substitutes; they behold all these efforts not only unsuccessful, but even contributing to strengthen the propensity they are so desirous of counteracting. Nothing therefore is more natural, than that a kind of resentment, a kind of hatred, should arise against those nations which are engaged in the colonial trade, on account of their situation, their wealth, and their maritime possessions; because they are considered as the authors of the (imaginary) impoverishment of Europe, and as enemies to the general welfare of all consuming countries. And since England has long possessed the largest share of that trade; since England has, during the last five or six years, attained to the almost exclusive enjoyment of it; it is not surprising that this short-sighted jealousy, this blind and groundless hatred, should be concentrated entirely against England. This is the general state of reasoning on the subject.

It is a great misfortune for mankind, that their imaginary wants of sugar, coffee, tea, cotton, &c. have gradually undermined the strength of every nation not addicted to commerce; but the English nation feels more  
of

of those articles, than all the others taken together ; therefore that nation is more responsible than any other for this always increasing misfortune. Ignorance of the true principles and elements of national wealth, produced the major of this remarkable syllogism ; experience has afforded the minor, and the blindness of prejudice has drawn the conclusion.

#### NOTE S S, p. 330.

WHEN the Dutch East India Company were in the exclusive and undisturbed possession of the spice islands, it would have been perfectly easy for them, according to the general opinion, to have maintained an arbitrary price of their produce, which had become absolutely necessary to Europe. They nevertheless considered it a thing so impossible, that, fearful of being beat out of all the markets, notwithstanding their great advantages, they had recourse to the barbarous measure of wantonly rooting out part of the plants, and destroying part of the produce ! Yet even these barbarous measures did not prevent their gradual decline.

#### NOTE T T, p. 333.

I WILL even go so far as to assert, that in those very nations which take an active part in general commerce, it is for the immediate advantage of the consumer, and thus far for the immediate advantage of the community, rather to purchase East and West India produce at a low price from English merchants, than at a high one from their own. But it must be confessed that in those countries, foreign commerce may have become such an important

portant branch of the general welfare, as to require the immediate interest of the consumer to be sacrificed to its maintenance and extension.

NOTE U U, p. 352.

I SHALL take this opportunity of exposing one of the most striking contradictions of which the Author of the *Etat de la France* has been guilty. After having exhausted his ingenuity in the first part of his work, to shew that England was the only nation strongly interested in the beginning, continuance, and protraction of the present war; he proves in a following chapter, of which the object is to represent the resources of Britain in the most unfavourable light, that no nation is so great a loser by the war, as the very one to which he had before asserted that it was absolutely necessary.

THE END.